

УНИВЕРСИТЕТСКО ИЗДАТЕЛСТВО "СВ. КЛ. ОХРИДСКИ"

И Л И Я К О Н Е В

**АМЕРИКА**

В

ДУХОВНОТО  
ПРОСТРАНСТВО  
НА  
БЪЛГАРСКОТО  
ВЪЗРАЖДАНЕ

И Л И Я К О Н Е В

**AMERICA**

IN THE  
SPIRITUAL  
SPACE  
OF THE  
BULGARIAN  
RENAISSANCE

ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI UNIVERSITY PRESS



I L I J A K O N E V

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**OF THE BULGARIAN**  
**RENAISSANCE**

ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI  
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# AMERICA IN THE SPIRITUAL SPACE OF THE BULGARIAN RENAISSANCE

## 1. About some common and specific features

The knowledge of America and of the USA, in particular, are not as

thorough for the Bulgarian from that epoch as, for wellknown, are his concepts of Europe. They are devoid of that feeling of closeness and commitment in history, of that natural flair for the similarities and the differences with the European cultures; they are not characterised by that solidarity between the neighbouring and far-off European nations. But the Bulgarian interests in Europe and in America share common features which could be explained by a number of reasons. The following are of the greatest importance:

1. The universal character of the ideas of the Enlightenment and their increasing acceptance among the Bulgarians in the 18th–19th century.

2. The constant enrichment of the truth about the newly discovered continent and the attention which the world (including the enslaved Bulgarians) paid to it.

3. The multi-aspectual relations of the USA with Europe and the increasing presence of Europe in the American way of life.

4. The place of the Balkans in the political aims of the USA and the early evolution of the relations between the Balkans and the USA.

The Bulgarian concepts of America need a detailed analysis. Those typical features which define their general characteristics are, no doubt, of primary importance. Of such importance is, for example, the fact that the relations established with America during the Renaissance are only tentative. The contacts which were under es-

tablishement at that time have no predecessors in the transitory periods, that is why there are neither any beaten tracks to be followed, nor any distinct achievements, directions, or traditions. The language and the culture of the proto-Bulgarians, the foundation of the Bulgarian state, the conversion to Christianity, the work of the two brothers from Thessalonica and their teaching, the Bogomili movement and the second South Slavonic influence have not been a source of a meaningful communication and a subject of great scientific publications in America since the middle of the last century as this is evident in the history of the Slavonic nations and of Europe as a whole.

The American linguist A.L. Longue studying the Slavonic language who has spent quite a long time living among Bulgarians delivered a series of lectures entitled „The Slavs and the Bulgarians“ in Robert College (Constantinople) in 1870. Explaining certain essential problems Longue marks as well in an original way this initial formation of mutual knowledge of two worlds almost unknown to one another until very recently: 'And after careful consideration', he sums up, 'it turns out that Bulgaria was enslaved 111 years before the discovery of America. Knowing the religious superstitions of those ages both to the East and to the West we cannot help wondering how they (the Bulgarians) managed to preserve not only the Bulgarian name but such a part of the Christianity as well. An impartial historian can't help sympathizing and participating lively in the destiny of this nation which in this dark night, in this fog lasting four hundred years has not forgotten its name, its language and even the name of the Christian religion'.<sup>1</sup>

With the above pointed merits (preserving their language, name, faith) the Bulgarians (we know this for sure) evoked the sympathy and admiration of almost every European travelling in the country of staying there for a longer period. Those merits to which Longue

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<sup>1</sup> „Македония“, IV, 62, 30.06.1870. In the same years Longue's lectures appeared in printed in a separate book entitled „Славяните и българите. Исторически разказ. (Извод от в. „Македония“). Цариград. В печатницата на в. „Македония“, 1870.

refers as well, give rise to many and different genres and to some extent they define the atmosphere of the relations, contacts and interactions with nations and cultures in Europe and other continents which were under way during the Renaissance.

Their presence in doctor Longue's reasoning points to the first essential peculiarity of the relations establishing between the USA and Bulgaria, and namely: by the middle of the 19th century the Bulgarians are only partly known to the Americans. Having preserved, however, some of the strongholds of their identity, they deserve 'the lively participation... of the impartial researcher' and, in this particular case, that of the American researcher with his comparatively late-formed interests. An expression of the marked impartiality of the researcher is the truth, emphasized by doctor Longue himself, about the virtues of the Bulgarians, about their language and faith – the original truth that guides the scientists from the last century. But although this rational idea gives impetus to the formation of the Bulgarian-American concepts, what was achieved by the end of the Renaissance in both directions is below the level of the European information among the Bulgarians and the Americans. As one anonymous writer notes in issue № 4 of the „Напредък“ newspaper from 22.09.1874, Bulgaria as a whole was 'unknown in America'.

The second peculiarity specifies the very formation of the Bulgarian ideas about America and of the American ideas about Bulgaria during the Renaissance. Most probably the spiritual life and the social organization in the USA remained in the 19th century, the century which is fundamental to the Enlightenment and the Renaissance, under the veil of the unknown for the Bulgarians of that age. This refers mostly to the Bulgarians from the interior of the country and could be explained with the extremely scanty information about the outer world. It is characteristic as well, however, of those of their fellow-countrymen in Russia, Serbia, Romania or any other European country who represent the leading tendencies and achievements in the Bulgarian cultural and national development with their activity. Krastju Peikich, Christophor



Zhepharovich, Parentii Pavlovich, Paisii Hilendarski, Sophronii Vrachanski and some other of their contemporaries are personalities who did not have the chance to tie down themselves and their literary work with the American reality, with the American history and culture.

Early information of America which influences the society appear in Bulgaria mainly during the second and the third decade of the last century. It is then when the USA and the other out-of-Europe countries start to come more and more into the universal knowledge of the Bulgarians and not just as geographical places. Several obvious achievements of the Bulgarian Enlightenment contribute to the realisation of this positive event, and namely: the periodicals, the new Bulgarian school with its renovated programmes, school literature in Bulgarian and foreign languages, the increased access to foreign books and their distribution among the Bulgarians, the revival of the Bulgarian Church; in general – the Bulgarian philological movement with its clearly marked and systematically carried out tasks. Visible evolution in the assimilation of the information about the new continent set in during the last two decades and they could be pointed as the highest moment in the firm establishment and enlargement of the here treated relationships.

The third peculiarity refers to the range of the system of bilateral relations and interactions with different nations and cultures. It is at that moment that the building up of this system is relatively finished as far as Europe is concerned. This, however, could not be said about the relations with out-of-Europe countries, nations and cultures – Japan, India, China, Egypt and America, of course. Apart from being initial these contacts are still quite wavering and irregular. And what is more, the views of the Bulgarians of America are defined by their knowledge about the USA, while the information about the history and the culture of the South American nations is only incidental. So, America achieves actual participation in the spiritual space of the Bulgarian Renaissance in the second quarter of the 19th century which does not exclude the possibility that some Bulgarians might



have had some scanty knowledge of America even in the 18th century.

The forth peculiarity clarifies some features, basic in themselves, of the two sides (the Bulgarian and the North American) during the given period. The Bulgarian interest in the USA fits into that pattern of the Humanistic and in its essence deeply cognitive attitude to the world which was under way even before Paisii Hilendarski, and namely: the development of the new societies and the free personality; the presidential elections; the civil movements; the economy and the agriculture; the political parties and events; the condition of the press; the role of the community, the progress of the education and the science; the considerable artistic works. The variety in the topics does not show at first sight any preference or insistence in the knowledge of any particular part of the life in America. But this is only on the surface and such a conclusion may create certain prejudice in the clarification of the problem in the very beginning. Central place in the Bulgarian information about America take the publications on the American history, the education and the social relations in the USA and the application of the principles of the Humanism and the Enlightenment in these areas, the political commentaries, the descriptions of places of interest, biographical articles about the American presidents and scientists. It is no chance that in 1837 Gavril Krastevich published his translation of 'The Almanac of Richard the Poor', a work of the American statesman, scientist and writer Benjamin Franklin which is wide-known in many European countries in the 19th century.<sup>1</sup> It is of special importance that articles treating such topics have a clearly stated subject and are rich in content; they are adapted to the educational situation in the liberating Bulgaria; they introduce different views on the contemporary problems and confirm one of the basic properties of the Bulgarian cultural and national development during

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<sup>1</sup> Аретов, Н. „Рецепцията на Бенжамин Франклин в България през Възраждането“ – Литературна мисъл, 1983, № 1, 155–163; Тодорова М.Н. „Личното счетоводство на българина през XIX в. – Епизод от формирането на буржоазен менталитет на Балканите.“ – Балканистика. 1986, № 1, 119–121.

the 18th–19th century: the new Bulgarian social thinking builds up awareness of itself and an attitude to the world based mainly on the knowledge in the field of history, education, social organization, political movements, social revolutions and the movements for national liberation in the countries from the different continents, or as Sophronii Vrachanski put it 'of the free and enlightened nations'. Developed consistently and purposefully in the 19th century this interest includes the trade, the contribution of the world-famous people, the great achievements of the natural and the mathematical sciences and the prosperity of man. This property, mentioned above, is a constant quantity to the Bulgarian Renaissance and to the interactions with the Enlightenment carried out at the time; from the beginning of the 18th century to the 70s of the 19th century, as in all periods, it gives impetus to the perception of the world in its greater variety.

The distributor of information and knowledge of the USA among the Bulgarians have a direct relation to this important peculiarity. We may divide them into three groups: 1/ The American educationalists staying in Bulgaria; 2/ The activists of the Bulgarian Renaissance connected directly and permanently with the Bulgarian cultural and national development; 3/ Men of letters outside Bulgaria without any direct participation in the Bulgarian culture. With some exceptions they haven't been in the USA<sup>1</sup> either with the intention to study in the colleges and the universities there or did they have the possibility to develop any intellectual activity there. This becomes something usual only after the Liberation<sup>2</sup> when the number of the Bulgarians

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<sup>1</sup> One of them, for example, is A.S.Tsankov who was in Itaka, America in the 70s of the 19th century. From there he sent his article entitled „Учебна деятелност в Америка“, published in issue № 10 of the „Македония“ Newspaper, 9.03.1871 to P.R.Slaveikov (at his request, probably).

<sup>2</sup> This is confirmed by an extract from the statistics about the number of the European settlers in the USA published in the „Дунав“ Newspaper, VII, 581, 6.VI.1871. According to it the number of the settlers in general is 7 612 000 and among them – 2 268 001 from Germany, 2 417 000 from Great Britain, 1 416 000 from Ireland, 245 000 from France, 3000 from Russia, 4000 from Poland and 1000 from different places. Bulgaria is not mentioned by name. It is absent from the report in issue № 28

studying in the USA increased and many of them contributed to the mutual ice-breaking and contacts which have started during the Renaissance. The proofs that are known by now show the following: our Renaissance has no direct support of any political, administrative, university or general educational centre about the USA. Under a closer examination it turns out that this is characteristic of all the relations established at that time with out-of-Europe countries and nations (India, Japan, China, Egypt) – we did not have and we could not have such a centre in any of them.

The interest of the USA in the Bulgarians and Bulgaria as a whole begins to fill with meaning in the second quarter of the last century as well. It is also characterized by the cognitive aims of the Enlightenment and the new era, and namely: the establishment of direct relations with teachers, men of letters, writers and clergymen; the formation of scientific knowledge of the origin, the past and the culture of the Bulgarians; the place of the religion and the condition of the church; the familiarizing with the contemporary life, the spirit and the national and political views of the people. These are more or less the fundamental aims of the increasing contacts between the nations in the 18th–19th century realized by different means.

There exist, however, differences which do not seem characteristic of the Bulgarian participation in the process of getting closer of the two countries and cultures. The American interest is to some extent ideologically and politically well-orientated. The task to exercise influence upon the adolescent part of the population is quite apparent; there is an ambition to cover not only the large administrative and cultural centres but villages and small towns as well. It is very important that the USA exercise their influence mainly by governmental or other connected with them social

of the „Отечество“ Newspaper from 6.03.1870, entitled „ЮЖНИТЕ СЛАВЯНИ В АМЕРИКА“ covering the educational initiative of the Austrian Slavs and of the Slav Community Centre established by them. It is possible, however, that 'different places' column contains individual Bulgarians as well. The same conclusion may be made by professor doctor Vesselin Traikov's work „БЪЛГАРИТЕ В АМЕРИКА“.

institutions, engaged to some extent with the spreading of the American influence on the Balkans and in South-Eastern Europe. Professional historians and slavists as well as experienced missionaries come and stay for a shorter or longer period in the Bulgarian land. They are all (directly or indirectly) connected with some official institution which pays them to act on their behalf. The USA usually found an institutional basis for their contacts in general and for Bulgaria in particular: the mission; Robert College and its branch for girls; the „Зорница“ Magazine and the „Зорница“ Newspaper and long staying educationalists.

These differences and advantages are already perceptible in the second quarter of the last century but become clearly apparent only in the third quarter when such Slavists and missionaries come to live in places marked beforehand in the yoked Bulgaria (and near it). They are united by the effort to strengthen by their activity the place of the USA in the spiritual space of the reviving Bulgaria, in the concepts of the ordinary Bulgarians and, most of all, in the intellectual interests of their well-educated fellow-countrymen. All this outlines another fundamental peculiarity-the **American mission** in Bulgaria (and the mission in general) as a factor of a distinct type of initiative, contacts and influence. Every missionary aims mainly at education, book publishing, religion, health services and at others of vital importance to people. The mission functions in free as well as in dependent or yoked countries such as the Balkan Christian countries within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire. The forms which it takes, however, differ in the different countries; the specific aims differ as well – it is noticed that in dependent countries these aims are carried out under cover or not quite openly and often in an intrusive way, which arises suspicion and even conflicts and contradictions.

The mission on the Balkans and in Bulgaria in particular has an interesting history. It begins in the 18th century as a charity and humane movement and mostly as a form of presence of certain institutions and communities in different regions in South-Eastern Europe. Unlike other countries Bulgaria accepts but does not send

out missionaries. At the same time missionary work starts comparatively late in it – only in the second quarter of the last century when missionaries from Russia, England, France and other European countries are gradually becoming popular.

There are several more differences. With countries like Russia, Austria, Serbia, Greece or Romania with which our nation is related in its early history **direct contracts** between citizens and institutions helped and directed to some extent by the state are given the advantage. The assistance of the missionaries and their communities has **supplementary** function although sometimes its role is openly expressed, multidirectional and markedly meaningful. Already in the beginning of the last century, for example, the Russian biblical society finds its way to the Bulgarians by offering their help in the translation of the New Testament. But countries like the USA which are far-off geographically and have different social organization use in Bulgaria and on the Balkans the possibilities of the mission organized mainly by religious communities. Due to such circumstances and reasons the American mission shows skill and flexibility in the accomplishment of its tasks. It makes use of the reforms of the Sublime Porte and manages under the conditions of the 19th century to establish in different parts of the yoked Bulgaria prerequisites for initial contacts and for their enrichment during the next periods. Its results are apparent in the fields of the church and the religion, of the school education, of the book publishing and the press-all fields of the philological movement in which the foreign slavists, philologists and social figures staying in Bulgaria become famous. Essential features of the American mission in Bulgaria is that many of its tasks it realizes by the help of such foreign slavists and philologists trying to establish and maintain direct contacts with them. It is very close, however, to the ideas of the Enlightenment and to some tasks of the Renaissance. It is due to this closeness that the American mission succeeds in some parts of Bulgaria.

All this does not contradict at all the truth that with some of its activities in specific situations the American mission aroused suspicion as well in many Bulgarians which was the reason for their opposition

to the fulfilment of its programme. On the contrary, every summary of the American mission of that time which does not acknowledge this truth risks to be marred in content and short living. Some of the reasons for the opposition in many places are, on the one hand, due to the complex reality in Bulgaria during that time and the behaviour of individual missionaries, on the other hand. The main reason, however, is the diviation from the ideas of the Enlightenment and the Bulgarian Renaissance, from the acquired and consistently followed national ideas. This item will be treated separately.

**2. The renovating ideas of the Enlightenment and the education – a basis of the knowledge of the USA in Bulgaria.**

The information about the USA and the activity of the

Americans among the Bulgarians in those years have considerable achievements in three directions at least: they introduce and approve of the USA in the knowledge of the Bulgarian about the world; they set up the beginning of the Bulgarian-American relations; they give impetus to the breaking of the ice between the two nations – a leading idea in the 18th–19th century. Apart from „Мудрост доброго Рихарда“ this information comes through about seventy articles dealing with this issue, over thirty reports on the life in the USA, feature articles about prominent and progressive Americans, political commentaries, two American periodicals (the „Зорница“ Magazine and the „Зорница“ Newspaper), several philological publications by American authors (including a grammar book of the Bulgarian language and the assistance for the translation of the Bible in Bulgarian), school literature about America and popular articles concerning the family and the christian view of life, the educational work of Robert College, a lyrical poem by Petko Slaveikov about America, translations of works by American writers and men of letters, translations of books about America by European writers, isolated information about the achievements of the American scientists and the actions of the American mission.

The share of the Bulgarian press for the information about America among the Bulgarians is not at all small. On the contrary it is surprisingly great for its time. The contribution of many periodicals, among which are the „Любословие“ magazine, the „Български книжици“ magazine, the „Читалище“ Magazine, the „Знание“ magazine, the „македония“ newspaper, the „Право“ newspaper, the „Отечество“ Newspaper, the „Век“ newspaper, the „Източно време“ Newspaper, the „Турция“ newspaper, the „Народност“ newspaper, the „Свобода“ newspaper, the „Независимост“ newspaper as well as the American issues of the „Зорница“ magazine and the „Зорница“ newspaper, is quite evident. Some of them are representative of their age and their commitment with those about America is, no doubt, a positive fact confirming the realization of the necessity during the Renaissance of more thorough knowledge of the world. Influential as well are the people connected to these problems: K. Fotinov, G. Krastevich, P. Kisimov, L. Karavelov, P.R. Slaveicov and others of their contemporaries.

Anyway, compared to the information about England, Italy, France, Austria and some other European countries (apart from Russia and the Balkan countries) the information about the USA looks not very wide in its range and unstable in its different directions. The content of the respective articles and the influence they exercised on the Bulgarians are of exceptional interest. The topics they usually deal with are: the Constitution of the republic and the example of its presidents, the stand of the USA towards Turkey and the Balkan countries, the trade as a factor under the new conditions, the agriculture and the other branches of the economy, the possibilities and the skills of the Americans for progress, the relations of the USA with China, Japan and most of all with the developed European countries, the rights and the fights of the Negroes, the condition of the press, the political parties and movements, the role of the communities as self-governing bodies.

As it was already pointed out matters concerning education and culture received a definite priority. They constantly attracted the attention in all periods of the Renaissance after the 30s of the 19th



century. Indicative of it are the following articles: Възпитанието на жените и народът („Македония“, IV, 82, 21.09.1870), Бъдещето на Американската цивилизация („Век“, 51, 21.09.1874), Учебна дейност в Америка („Македония“, V, 10, 9.03.1871), Полза от учението („Училище“, III, 8, 16.06.1873), За възпитанието на жената в Америка („Турция“, V, 40, 11, 22, 29.11.1869), Как ся възпитава женският пол в Америка („Читалище“, IV, 13, 1.07.1874), Образованието на жените в Америка („Македония“, IV, 40, 7.04.1870), Размишленията на М.Гизо за християнството („Зорница“, I, a programme issue, 1870), Напредъкът в Америка (the same source, I, 33, 13.08.1876), Америка и Европа (the same source, II, 16, 10.02.1877), Неделните училища в Съединените държави в Америка (the same source, II, 21, 26.05.1877).

The interest which such articles arose to the forms and the achievements of the education in the USA must have been great and influential if some of the most popular periodicals issue articles treating the matter. Indicative of it are the following facts as well: In 1872 St. Bobchev translates and publishes in the „Читалище“ magazine (II, 20–23) E.Lavele's brochure 'По народното образование в XIX столетие' which sets forth the information and the appraisal of the tendencies in the education in America, as well as his article 'Общонародно обучение в американските училища' translated by T.P. and published in the „Время“ newspaper, I, 1866, issue № 30–42. Direct relation to this topic have 'Писмо от Америка. Черти от Американския живот', published separately and translated by N.Mihailovski; 'Карта на Америка' (size 100x70) published in 1863 and 1875; 'Учебен атлас в двадесет и четири карти' by M.G.Danov, Plovdiv, 1865; the concise feature article by Labule 'Историята на Съединените Щати' (the „Читалище“ magazine, II, 16–24, 15th May – 15th Sept., 1872) and several similar publications.

I do not know whether this is too much or enough. But I am convinced that it is not at all little for Bulgaria of the third quarter of the last century just before The April Uprising and The War of Liberation that followed when not a single periodical had a secure

budget, not even for several issues. Important from this point of view are the feature articles about the prominent American presidents and social figures: Тусен Левертюр („Независимост“, III, 48, 18.08.1873); 'Георг Вашингтон' (the same source, IV, 1–6, 20.10–24.11.1873); 'Венеамин Франклин' (the same source, IV, 7–13, 1.12.1873–12.01.1874). Of the articles treating this matter we will point out several which share common features: 'Напредъкът в САЩ и възможностите за напредък в Турция' („Цариградски вестник“ q A, 30, 7.04.1851), 'Статистика и тираж на вестниците в САЩ' („България“, II, 56, 13.03.1873), 'Църквите в САЩ' („Български книжици“, II, 19, 1950), 'Какво правят американците за просвещението си' („Ступан“, IV, 21–22, 31.03.1875), 'САЩ – църквата и държавата' („Зорница“, I, 9.02.1876), 'Продукцията на американския печат в Ню Йорк' („Цариградски вестник“, V, 35, 5.02.1849).

I must mention a gain that such articles are signed by prominent activists of the Renaissance such as Konstantin Fotinov, Ivan Seliminski, Gavril Krastevich, Todor Shishkov, Nikola Parvanov, P.R.Slaveikov, Ivan Bogorov, Ljuben Karavelov, Christo Botev. They are, in fact the figures of the Renaissance who formed the image of the USA and thus filling up one very important part from the cultural history of the Bulgarian Renaissance. Of similar importance are the above quoted American works and studies of America by foreign authors and their research in different fields of knowledge. Here are only several facts significant from this point of view: in 1844 Gavril Krastevich translates from French „Откритието на Америка. Книга забавителна и полезна за всекиго“ published under this title and translated by P.Kisimov: Part 1 – 1875; Part 2 – 1876<sup>1</sup>, in 1872 the „Читалище“ magazine publishes in nine books „По историята на Съединените щати от французкий списател Лабулье“<sup>2</sup>; in 1870 P.V.Goranov and P.R.Slaveikov publish in

<sup>1</sup> According to some sources the same work was translated by Raine Popovich as well.

<sup>2</sup> Аретов, Н. 157, 160. The author explains that the work covers The War of Independence – a very exciting issue at that time.

Constantinople their translation of 'Париж в Америка' by the above mentioned Edward Labule – a book which was well-spoken of by L.Karavelov in issue № 5 of the „Свобода“ newspaper from 3.12.1869; in 1875 L.Karavelov's „Детска библиотека“ (№ 4) publishes the popular book 'Разкази за водата и нейните свойства'; at the same time as well appear 'Съкратена история за умственото развитие в Европа' by John Drepper translated by K.Kotsev; 'Неистово безверие и избавление или християнството и безверниците' by D.Nelson (1874); 'Папата и римско-католическата църква или наместник Христов ли е папата и каква е римско-католическата църква' (1860); 'Черти от американския живот' translated by N.Mihailovski (1868); 'Белий папагал или сцени от американския живот' translated by N.Mihailovski (1869); 'Християнското учение за бога и за човеческата длъжност' by Charles Morse (1862) and other examples outline the contents of this well-expressed tendency in the development of the Bulgarian-American cultural relations. Special attention deserve the little amount of the translated works of American writers because they open another perspective. This happens in 1858 when Dimitar Mutev publishes Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' translated again in 1870 by T.Shishkov. What was achieved in those two decades was little but what counts is the broadening of the knowledge as a result of a long lasting process.

The beginning was set by the above mentioned Benjamin Franklin's Almanac from 1837 („Мудрост доброго Рихарда“ and M.Prodikov) treated in details by Nikolai Aretov in the light of the early Bulgarian prose and its relation to the translated literature<sup>1</sup>. But this problem has another side which, should be explained. At the end of the 30s this work is one of the greatest successes of the few

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<sup>1</sup> In it Aretov sees 'the great point of contact' (p. 160) and the main reason for translating the work. Without rejecting this explanation in its essence, I think that the main reasons consist in the broadening of the horizon of the Bulgarian man of letters during the 70s. He looks for the similarities in the harmony of a given work with the ideological tendencies of the time and in this context with the concrete tasks of the Bulgarian national development.

educated Bulgarian men of letters who had some knowlage of the Enlightenment and its manifestations in the different countries and especially in America. The Second Collection from Vidin comprises works typical for the Enlightenment or very close to its ideas but still Sophronii Vrachanski remains within the European spiritual values. The same refers to the 'Славянобългарское детоводство' by Neophit Bozveli and Emanuil Vaskidovich – they too make use of the available Russian, Greek, Serbian and other 'European' in their essence books. The same is true about Hristaki Pavlovich, Naiden Gerov and most of all Neophit Rilski when writing his grammar book. An exception to some extent is the unpublished book of Georgi Peshakov – 'Книга за нравствените поучения на индийския фило-соф'. But we are not familiar to its contents that is why we could only guess about the widening of the subject matter in the new Bulgarian literature achieved by it immediately after Sophronii.

Anyway, it is an indisputable fact that the orientation to Europe set by Sophronii Vrachanski (the most prolific and gifted Bulgarian translator from the 18th century) still continues with its characteristic interest in works dealing with the education, the spirit and the social position of the educated and restless man from the 18th and the first half of the 19th century. What is new is that with the translation of „Мудост доброго Рихарда“ G. Krastevich connects this line in our literature with a work typical for the American Enlightenment and Georgi Peshakov – with the Indian one which attracted the attention of other men of letters as well. There is a process of overcoming this orientation to Europe even before it managed to create its theoretical basis in Bulgaria. This is accomplished by the translation of works that are ideologically close to us which makes it easy to clarify similar problems about man, education, independence and moral virtues and later about Christianity. Later on this process includes tendencies which suggest the isolation of this orientation to Europe into a special view of life and position suggesting signs of opposition as well. Depending on the essence and the influences of such tendencies the orientation to Europe of the Bulgarian social thinking and culture will either

strengthen its position by differentiating from them or by ignoring them will accept every other possibility for contacts with other ideological systems and views of life.

Judged from such a point of view the translation 'Мудост добро-го Рихарда' is extremely interesting. By some of its characteristic features the work is in harmony with other works treating similar issues like 'Гражданско позорище' and some of the philosophical wise sayings in Sophronii's Second Collection from Vidin, the quoted work of G.Peshakov, 'The Philosophical Wise Sayings and the Practical Pieces of Advice' in „Рибен буквар“ by Peter Beron, 'Христоития или благонравие' by Raino Popovich and even some parts of the 'Славянобългарское детоводство' by the two teachers from Svistof-Emanuel Vaskidovich and Nophit Bozveli. Their essence follows a line which is new and at the same time characteristic of our Enlightenment for a long time, namely, the rise of the enterprising and patriotic person who makes it due to his civil virtues and view of life. The necessity of this line in the Bulgarian life is permanent but during the second quarter of the last century it is too big. Ana people were aware of it. Central place among the issues under discussion is occupied by the problem of the personal formation of the Bulgarian and the Bulgarian society as a whole. It was a lucky coincidence that at this stage the attention of the seeking Bulgarian is drawn to the worldly wisdom of a particular person in the American society out of the European continent. It seems logical that the 'overcoming' of the orientation to Europe in this case is prepared by this very orientation and is accomplished through ideas related to it and universal to the Enlightenment.

It is for similar reasons that Franklin's book becomes very popular in Russia, France, England, Greece and some other Slav countries.<sup>1</sup> Some of those translations might have been known to the young Krastevich and it is possible that they encouraged him in his decision to reveal the truths of the famous book to his fellow-

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<sup>1</sup> Апетов, Н. Quoted article.

countrymen<sup>1</sup>. Written as a confession and told in a simple way this book is quoted in different editions almost till the end of the period. But more important is the harmony with the spirit of the Bulgarian and the tendencies characterizing our development as a nation. There is a special emphasis on the importance of being loyal to the nation; on the necessity of efficient forces in both man and society; idleness is criticised in the line set up by Sophronii; persistence is made into a cult; education is blessed; pragmatism in the positive sense of the word is encouraged and the thrift recommended by Sophronii as well wins recognition not as a quality of pragmatism but as a way of facing the next day.

All this means the beginning of a new 'Hristoïtia' – on the one hand, a **Hristoïtia** of the people's prosperity in the name of the universal ideals and aims, and on the other hand, a **Hristoïtia** which marks the first real step into the knowling of two geographically far-off societies unknown to each other by then. It is not by chance that Raino Popovich is a patron of the book – a man of letters with a flair for such 'hristoïtic' truths.

Here are several examples which reveal the essence of the wisdom drawn from real life and some pieces of practical advice: 'I realized at last', says the author, 'that my best judge were the people because they bought my calendars<sup>2</sup> and thus strengthened my self-confidence of being a desired and useful writer'; 'If time is the most precious thing in the world, its wasting destroys man, as Richard the Good says...'<sup>3</sup>; 'Idleness goes so slowly that poverty strikes at once'<sup>4</sup>; 'Times will be good when we make them good... No profit comes

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<sup>1</sup> The original title is: „Мудрост доброго Рихарда. От французкият на славено-болгарският наш язык преведено от Гаврила Кръстевича Котленца. Настоянием же и посдивением Райна Поповича Ж. на свет издава. Издание первое... в Будиме граде... 1837“ The author has obviously possessed the German edition because he writes 'Richards Geschichte' on the first page.

<sup>2</sup> The same book, p.8.

<sup>3</sup> The same book, p.11.

<sup>4</sup> The same book, p.12.



without effort!’<sup>1</sup>; ‘Hunger stays at the doorstep of the hard-working man, but dare not enter’<sup>2</sup>; ‘A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush’<sup>3</sup>; ‘Use your time in the right way, if you want to live at peace’<sup>4</sup>; ‘A woman who works hard with her distaff is never left without clothes’<sup>5</sup>; ‘I have never seen a tree growing up while someone constantly changes its position and people who are constantly on the run are never as prosperous as those who keep to their work’<sup>6</sup>; ‘If you go abroad to make a fortune, try to learn to earn but to save as well’<sup>7</sup>; ‘Little streams make great rivers. Avoid little expenditures. A small hole is enough to make a big ship sink... I have seen a lot of broken people because of buying cheap’<sup>8</sup>; ‘Earn as much as you can and save as much as you earn. This is the only way to keep evil away’. This is a ‘philosopher’s stone’<sup>9</sup>; ‘Fame that has lunch with pride, has dinner with humiliation. Fame has breakfast with abundance, lunch with poverty and dinner with shame’<sup>10</sup>; ‘Remember, by the way, that he who does not know how to accept a piece of advice he can’t be helped...’<sup>11</sup>.

These are the main points in Richard’s wisdom. They are accepted in our country in a multi-aspectful way: as a way of looking on life by the man coming from the newly-discovered continent, as a continuation of the open conversation Sophronii and his followers began with the society concerning these issues. They impress with

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<sup>1</sup> The same book, p.12.

<sup>2</sup> The same book, p.14.

<sup>3</sup> The same book, p.15.

<sup>4</sup> The same book, p.17–18.

<sup>5</sup> The same book, p.19.

<sup>6</sup> The same book, p.20.

<sup>7</sup> The same book, p.24.

<sup>8</sup> The same book, p.28.

<sup>9</sup> The same book, p.42.

<sup>10</sup> The same book, p.34.

<sup>11</sup> The same book, p.43.



the harmony with those ideas about the educated European which Ivan Bogorov and his contemporaries spread systematically through their articles about the economic progress in Europe. Thus these wise sayings not only merge with the knowledge of Europe but lie at the basis of a process which is very characteristic of the Renaissance – the Bulgarian concept of the economic freedom and prosperity of the individual as an opportunity for social progress.

The acceptance of these virtues and principles of the new individual does not suppress, however, the just protest against the negative phenomena and pursuit in certain milieus, against that strange 'pan' added at the time to national, ethnic and religious societies like, for example: Germany (Pan-Germanism), Slav, Slavism (Pan-Slavism), Americans, Americanism (Pan-Americanism), Turks, Turkism (Pan-Turkism), Islam, Islamism (Pan-Islamism) etc. What is more, the increasing of the influence of one country on another country or region could, under certain conditions, become a prerequisite for the permanent usage of this 'pan' as well which at a later stage turns into an obstacle against the constructive influence of the respective country. This has almost become a rule. Prominent and educated activists of the time like K. Fotinov, V. Aprilov, R. Popovich, I. Bogorov, P.R. Slaveikov, G. Krastevich often underline the importance of the money for the individual and social prosperity of every nation in their works. When they discuss the universities and the bloom of the sciences in 'the free and educated countries' they emphasize this natural relation. Close to such convictions was Sophronii with his so fierce and sarcastic attack upon those well-off people in his country who were careless and egoistic to the necessities of our Enlightenment. And at the same time these very same men who were convinced in the advantages of the economically wealthy societies and countries and their beneficial influence for the education, arts and sciences criticise violently the danger of superiority and nationalistic ambitions resulting from this pursuit. And this danger is an increasing in time negative quantity for the Enlightenment. Significant from this point of view and related to the early stage of contacts between the

Bulgarians and the Americans which we discuss here is the following example by Ivan Bogorov: 'During the last fight (the Crimean War) a high-standing American who was sent in Bulgaria and whom we accompanied on the way from Shoumen to Ruchuck watched those beautiful woods and meadows and often said: 'This is American Europe!' (Emphasis by Iv. Bogorov). It goes without saying that this dodger might have taken us for the black slaves in America as well'.<sup>1</sup>

The resistance implied in this text goes in one direction – the 'American dodger' has gone too far in his lordly dreams and 'the ignorant in his eyes Bulgarian' defends his patriotism and gives an expression of his offended dignity. But the resistance in this particular case has another meaning as well. It is provoked by this out-of-Europe hegemony which shocks at this early stage of contacts. In this sense it forms the idea about the larger geographical range of such spirits and their relation to the attempts for predominance on the Balkans. This is the reason to emphasize that this tendency becomes at the time characteristic of every contact and movement whose name has the prefix 'pan': Pan-Germanism, Pan-Greek, Pan-Russianism, Pan-Slavism, Pan-European, Pan-Americanism, etc. That is why the indignation expressed in this case is no doubt a feature of the Humanism of the Renaissance – the age which takes out the Bulgarian and the other enslaved nations from the one-way and mostly idyllic attitude to Europe and 'the educated countries and nations' regarded indisputably as a centre of freedom, justice and progress in the 18th century. In this sense the Renaissance makes a step forward compared to the Enlightenment in explaining the social views on one, no doubt, important issue.

Finally let me once again point out the great necessity of Richard's pieces of advice for the Bulgarian of that age. It comes so on time that it keeps the interest in them and in the author almost till the end of the period. In 1869 the small book „Сиромаш Богдан или способ за обогатяване“ by V. Franklin is published in Constanti-

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<sup>1</sup> Богоров, И. И се започна с „Български орел“. Подбор от Петко Тотев. С., 1963, 199.

nopole. A book which is very instructive to the people and translated by P.R.Slaveikov. A little earlier the „Съветник“ newspaper publishes „Седенките на дяда Богдана“<sup>1</sup> written in the same spirit. At the same time The „Македония“ Newspaper publishes V.Franklin's „Изкуство да стане човек богат“<sup>2</sup> together with his detailed biography. Similar in character is the article „Пътят към обогатяването или науката на добрий Рихарда“ translated from French by I.Jovchev.<sup>3</sup> The issue of Richard's pieces of advice influences the Bulgarian development in different ways and it could be traced in the works of Ilija Blaskov as well.

Anyway, the information about the education and the reviving ideas in the American society is of decisive importance. It penetrated simultaneously with the publications on the economic progress of the Americans and this simultaneousness indicative of many other bilateral contacts characterizes the Bulgarian view of the world in general. What matters in this case is that almost everywhere it is the orientation to the ideological, political, educational and moral aspects of the American life that is given an advantage and this explains the universality of the period in its national, European and out-of Europe manifestations.

It has been mentioned that in the advance copy of the „Любословие“ magazine in 1842 (p. 16–17) K. Fotinov places a map of the two earth hemispheres and gives the following explication: „On the western hemisphere one can see North America and South America below it, in which there are up to 50 thousand inhabitants (50 000 000)“. In the first issue of the same magazine (April, 1844) Fotinov adduces the following impressive data with reasonable pain for that time and today because of the wretched situation of our native press and his own modest initiatives in this area: in America 1 136 newspapers are published, the library in Philadelphia possesses 244 000 books<sup>4</sup>. The

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<sup>1</sup> the „Съветник“ newspaper, I, 19–24, 29.07.–2.02.1863.

<sup>2</sup> The „Съветник“ Newspaper, CI, 21–22, 27.04.1868.

<sup>3</sup> The „Съветник“ Magazine, II, 13, April 1872, p. 586.

information is similar to the explanations about book printing and librarianship in Germany, France and other European countries, reflected in the same magazine. Then the enlightener of the Bulgarian Renaissance forms among his fellow countrymen the notion of historically shaped distances and the importance of the undertaken initial steps to the cultural advancement of the Bulgarians. It was this which could be done in these unfavourable conditions and it was done. We should point out the same thing about the well-written article in the third issue of the magazine on the problems of the Christianity. A number of curious pieces of information about catholicism and catholics in the world, including America too, were given there. Another valuable item is the statistic check up in the 14-th issue, February 1846, p. 29: „A newly published magazine testifies that therefore the following dialect languages are spoken: 587 European languages and dialects..., 1164 American languages and dialects“ It turns to be obvious that „North America“ by K.Fotinov gets into the knowledge and notions of the Bulgarians more and more efficiently, naturally supporting their reviving feeling of presence in the world.

What especially contributes to the confirmation of this tendency are the supervening articles on the problems of education, public instruction and culture in the USA as well as the feature articles about famous American personalities – statesmen, scholars, writers. Besides the fact that they form the basic in importance nucleus of information about the USA, they also confirm the main distinctive features of such a kind of publications: the ability to choose characteristic details, conviction in their importance for the Bulgarians too, fairness and possible completeness of the asserted point of view, correctness and motivation of the evaluations, aspiration for forming

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<sup>12</sup>(Several years later Iv. Seliminski quotes the following facts: „In Europe 2150 such newspapers and magazines are published, in America – 1140, in Asia – 27, in Africa – 12 and in Australia – 8“ Селимински, Ив. Избрани съчинения. Съставител и редактор проф. Михаил Бъчваров, С., 1979, 272).

a true notion about the ideals and the progress of the continent they were getting to know, capacity to relate the discussed topic (directly or indirectly) to the situation in Bulgaria and the general progress. The article „Народното просвещение в Америка“ („Македония“, V, 3, 16.I.1871, p. 10) impresses mostly with the ambition of its author to comprise its theme with its essential peculiarities: the unreducing actuality of educational questions, their large-scale discussion in the press and in the specialized issues, the increased attention of the public and its tangible duties, state's care and the budget means provided by the state, the periodically accomplished novation of the methodological and methodical principles of instruction, the education as a basis of the state's prosperity and common progress. The article of A.S. Tsanove.

„Учебна деятелност в Америка“ („Македония“, V, 100, III, 1871) is similar as it also forms notions about the legitimate basis of the education and the guaranteed freedom for activities in this area, the lively discussions in the press and audience, the goal orientation of students to a given field of knowledge.

This approach is distinctive for the rest of the articles mentioned which is also confirmed by the article „Напредъкът в Америка“ („Зорница“, I, 33.13.VIII.1876). Besides, almost all of the authors of such articles support their conclusions with indisputable evidence: types and number of schools, levels and forms of education, budget means, rights and duties of the municipalities. Published in an age when the strengthening of the Bulgarian municipalities and their interrelation with the native schools is a broadly discussed question, the article „Общините в Съединените Американски Щати“ („Македония“, 18.IX.1886) is not only informative but also advisable in character: „The people of the United States of America“, it says „has as its main principle that“ every person best knows his/her own interest and no one has the right to interfere his deals unless his/her deals turn to be harmful for the society or for private persons, or when the community needs his/her cooperation for some socially useful enterprises“, concludes the author „The freedom in America is based on this principle that every single municipality related to the

whole state is regarded as a personality and it is independent from the government, as for its government...”

The positive conclusions about the progress of education and instruction in the USA are established in the notion of the Bulgarians with even greater conviction by means of series of articles about eminent figures of American diplomacy, politics, science and culture. Evidence of this type can also be found in the detailed feature article „Георг Вашингтон“ coming out consecutively in seven issues of the „Независимост newspaper<sup>1</sup> and most probably written by L. Karavelov. The feature article gathers together both the biographical facts about this outstanding personality from the 19th century and essential moments of the political, military, social, juridical and cultural history of the USA. All of them are significant, on the one hand, for the recognition of democratic ideals in the American society and the progress, achieved in different areas, and on the other hand – for the enormous personal contribution of George Washington. „And actually“, states the author, „Washington was worthy to wear a laurel and oak wreath on his head... Washington’s great life-work was absolutely brilliant and extraordinary“<sup>2</sup>.

The feature article is one of the best publication in our press of the 60-s and 70-s of the previous century, forming true to life notions about countries and world – famous personalities, about social, scientific and spiritual progress of mankind. The newspaper of the revolutionary party has rendered great service in this direction as some of the most instructive articles designed for this appeared on its pages. Such are the biographical remark about B. Franklin in the „Македония“ newspaper, which has already been mentioned, and before all the feature article „Бенжамин Франклин“ published in seven issues of „Независимост“ („Независимост“, Bucharest, V, 7, 1.XII.1873, 8. XII.1873, 10. 22.XII.1873, 11. 23.XII.1873; 12. 5.I.1874, 12. 13.I.1874) Here also the personal is in close connection

<sup>1</sup> „Независимост“ Bucharest, IV, 1. 20.X.1873; 2. 27.X.1873; 3. 3.IX.1873; 4. 10.XI.1873; 5. 17.XI.1873; 6. 24.XI.1873; 7. 1.XI.1873)

<sup>2</sup> (Same source, 6. 24.XI. 187 p. p. 44–45)

with some basic moments of the development of America in the 18th century. The effect is achieving a certain completeness of the information about this country. However the feature article is better designed for the rise and prosperity of a single person – an idea which the Bulgarian has had in mind, making it more precise also by the already known fragment of „Тестамент на бедният Ричард“. The early years of Franklin in Boston and in his crowded family of 16 brothers and sisters the strong influence of the book „Животописанията на Плугарха“ upon him, his first steps in mastering his printer's profession in Philadelphia; the persistency he showed in the pursuit of the chosen object; the career he worked out in England and Philadelphia; the university, founded by means of a nation wide subscription, organized by him; his participation together with George Washington in the war against England and his generally recognized merit to the independance of the USA – these are well traced out moments from the creative path of life of Franklin, called in the feature article „a citizen of his mother country“. It's Ljuben Karavelov again who is the possible author of another feature article – about Tusen Leverture („Независимост“, III, 1878, 48, p. 381–182; 49. p. 389–390; 50. p. 397–398, 51. p. 405–406; 52. p. 413–414) – a heroic, Arabian negro with a tragic destiny. Having reached the rank of a colonel in the French army, he died slandered in treachery, but his ideas and his life exemplify the hard and most often joyless fate of the coloured men in America of that time. Thus the Bulgarian is shown truths after truths about the newly discovered continent, which at the same time pierce the artistic ideal of the new Bulgarian literature.

In this atmosphere of obviously increasing interest in America and not without the influence of this atmosphere Petko Slaveikov designs a significant and a bit unusual work for our literature of that time. Its probable genre characteristic is a poem and its basic theme – the moral incompatibility between the primitive American aborigenes and the civilited European“. In 1865 Slaveikov publishes the introductory part („Просвещение“) and entitles it just like that: „Дивата Американка и питомний европеец“. Although the



fragment is very rich in content as a „sad song“ (according to the author's expression), it does not fully represent the conception of the literary work.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless the idea is comprehensible and deeply humane – to distinguish and oppose to each other the bearers of two morally different mentalities. The admiration for Christopher Columbus's great discovery is along with all that admiration for the surprising truth about the spiritual purity of the newly discovered there people and ethnic communities:

1. Once upon a time in this world  
There were people living, people like us,  
Only they were, poor them, plain and wild,  
But innocent, righteous and wild-tempered.  
They led a peaceful life, knowing no sorrow,  
And blessed they were in their ignorance.

Distinctive marks for them are: simple – heartedness, frankness, devotion, candour, faith in good, attachment to the traditional principles of the untempted morals. Contrary to the expectations, the educated European is a bearer of greediness, insidiousness, deception. In accordance with the romantic vision of the poet about the two worlds, the strength of the moral conflict is determined by unsuspected secrecy of deeds and thoughts:

2. Hearing about this world, new and unknown  
Brave Europeans rushed head over hills  
Each as best he can  
Only to get there and start grabbing  
Greedy for gold, these fierce Europeans  
Conquered everything, captured everyone  
and subdued the miserable natives.

What follows are persecutions against „the miserable native tribes“, a war begins and „fights start between Europeans and primitive Americans“ – unique and cruel battle:

<sup>1</sup> (Славейков, П.Р. Съчинения – Пълно събрание в десет тома.)

3. In this dreadful war, in these horrid bloodsheds,  
They fought for their homes, for their native land,  
they fought with the courage of the real heroes.

But if the differences shown in the fight are to a certain extent determined by the contrary motives of the very conflict, the relations between the Frenchman Balkur and the primitive American native girl, depicted on this background, reveal the moral incompatibility between the two worlds, observed in the beginning stage of their getting to know each other being „Badly wounded in the breast by a feathered arrow“ and having got into trouble. Balkur stays alive due to the supreme humanity, manifested to him:

4. A savage girl heard him moaning  
Saw him, took pity and came to help him.  
Strange seemed to her this young European,  
an enemy and foe to her native tribe  
He is an enemy and yet a man who is dying  
How could she pass and leave him?  
She couldn't help but jump as if he were her brother  
Lifted him with an effort and took him there  
into the cave so deep and made a bed for him  
and then tucked him with soft forest leaves.

The intimate feelings that naturally appeared in the poor American girl and the family formed complement her inborn admiration with man. But soon they are blown up by Balkur's deceitful behaviour – having returned to France with her, he fails her and thus Slaveikov finishes the introductory part („the sad song“) of his poem!

5. They sailed the seas and reached Europe  
And find themselves in a town unknown to her.  
Oh, how shall I put it, you unfaithful Frenchman!  
Here he takes his chance to carry out  
his mean intention and his lewd plan,  
what he has designed and decided earlier

In awful treachery and ingratitude  
To flee in secret, to leave without a word  
His wife, his saviour.

The heart of the matter is less biographical, and the poet's aim is not a sentimentally pathetic one – to move the Bulgarians with the unhappy destiny of the American „Miserable Krastinka“. It is before all artistically ideological. The conception of Slaveikov is to motivate the known real clash between the aggressiveness of the „civilized Paneuropean“ and connected with it hardly expected antihumane dimensions of a European and Europe, widely represented in Bulgarian literature till the middle of the previous century as a prime source of ethics and humanity. It is also in the fact that these unsuspected qualities are considered in a general human light, not as a consequence of the position of America – Europe, France in this case, to Bulgaria and the Bulgarians. It leads the critical spirit of the Bulgarians to the negative in general, in the very person beyond his/her national definitions although the character of the work is a Frenchman. The aggressive exclamation attested by I. Bogorov „Here is European America“ coincides with the similar in its essence vulgarization of the humane sentence: „Here is European America“.

The formed here critical view upon the representatives of western-European civilization originated in the 40-s of our cultural national development. Indicative of this point of view are „Плач бедная Мати Болгария“ by Neophit Bozveli, Ivan Seliminski's articles and letters, Raiko Zhinzifov's poems, Dobri Voinikov's comedy „Криворазбраната цивилизация“, separate poems by Ivan Vazov and their like works. They all are an expression of the existing in the consciousness of the Bulgarians from the second and mainly from the third fourth of the previous century critical attitude towards Europe. It overcomes the one-sided idyllic admiration of Sophronii Vrachanski, it does not coincide with the partial notion of the so called „orientation to Europe“ either. The prerequisites for the recognition of a new view are to be found in the enriched general

notion about Europe and its attitude to Bulgaria particularly: the politically speculative in the standpoint of „cultivated Europe“ towards the Eastern Question and the national – liberation ideals of Bulgarians.

Petko Slaveikov's poem is the first work of art which gives a meaning to the concerned moral dimensions of the Europeans beyond its direct dependence of the Bulgarian reality. Towards the humanistic essence of the universalism in the ideas and literature of the Renaissance, towards the thesis „he is an enemy“ and the antithesis: „yes, but he is a man“. Without opposing these two lines (national and universal), this view marks them off and complements them as approaches for getting to know reality in its broad dimensions. Petko Slaveikov's special merit in this case is that he introduces America particularly in this wider context of the common to all mankind and hence as an irrevocable mark of the universal and universalism in Bulgarian fiction.

## AMERICA IN EDUCATIONAL LITERATURE

The basic purpose of this type of literature is instructive and of general educational value. It is this on principle, that's why in the second volume of „БЪЛГАРСКОТО ВЪЗРАЖДАНЕ И ПРОСВЕЩЕНИЕТО“ (София, 1991) I quoted a number of examples. The educational literature forms a general view over the world and specialized interests in particular areas of knowledge, supports the national – patriotic and stimulates the universal in the point of view of a Bulgarian, increases his/her culture and the culture of society, confirms the feeling of a christian and Slavonic community, basic for this epoch. But a part of it provides particular knowledge about the history and culture of given countries and peoples, what is characteristic in them and their nationally important figures. That's why it is never indifferent what knowledge this kind of education literature offers about the different countries and people, whether the respective feature articles about them reveal fair, rich in content, or

superficial and wrong information. This distinguishes the textbooks from each other in their essence, predetermines the changing preference for them and their possible critical evaluations.

What are the stories about America in the education literature in Bulgarian language from that epoch? They are, in general, translated – usually from Russian or Greek, rarely from other languages. No Bulgarian is known to have written his textbook comprising chapters about America, nor to have published his work with a historical – geographical character about this continent. However in the press appear articles, different in their topics, by our authors, some of which have immediate relation also to educational literature. They add to and strengthen the interest in educational literature about America as far as they concern discussed in this literature questions. What is also a fact is vast knowledge about America of those of our men of letters, who were educated in Russia, Austria, Germany, France and other countries or lived there for a long time. They read publications in the respective language and even express their opinion of the qualities of these publications. Naiden Gerov, Vasil Aprilov, Ivan Seliminski, Petar Beron, Ivan Bogorov, Ljuben Karavelov, Hristo Botev proceed like that. Some of them own in their personal libraries books about America and works by American authors, which is undoubtedly important.

The first history and geography textbooks with feature articles about America appear in the beginning of the 40–s and this coincides with the needs of the new Bulgarian education after the opening of the high school in Gabrovo. The best ones date from the 70–s and tally with the works of K. Smirnov, „Землеописание. Европа.“ (Вина, 1874) and „Землеописание. Общи познания“ (Вина, 1874), translated by K. Kirkovich, as well as „Землеописание. Учебен атлас в 24 карти“ by Hr. G. Danov. The better part of them does not concern historical, geopolitical peculiarities of the continent; they comprise evidence about population, accepted state system, to a different extent they range subjects of education, religion and way of life of particular peoples. Their juxtaposition with the texts about European countries confirms already mentioned special features:

they are not volumetric and do not comprise the typical complements, with which the translators draw the attention of the students and readers in general to the Bulgarians and their motherland. With these pointed out special features and others the like they are the beginning, which introduces America in the school instruction and together with the other kinds of the information maintains the interest in it. It should be added that it also happened in the second fourth of the previous century and was established simultaneously with the progress of the Bulgarian school education.

### Examples:

1. In „Краткое политическое землеописание. За обучение на болгарское младенчество“ (Кратуевац, 1835), Neophit Bozveli places different in volume and form feature – articles about „different religions, languages and inhabitants“ of the globe. The first detailed descriptions of America in Bulgarian are among them. This new part of the world which Christopher Columbus from Genua discovered in the year of our Lord 1492, is all surrounded by seas and it exceeds all other parts of the World in its magnitude...“ What follows are explanations about rivers, mountains and inhabitants of the continent. The chapter about North America comprises the stories: 1. Columbian Earth; 2. Greenland; 3. Shpitsburg; 4. British North America; 5. North American united free states; 6. Spanish North America.

2. In 1894 K.Fotinov issues in Smirna „Общее землеописание. В кратце за сичката земля. Преведено от гречески на славянско-болгарский язык“. The total print is comparatively great, the sponsors are from different parts of Bulgaria, the book is intended for the new Bulgarian schools. The feature article about America takes a few pages and its contents is significant for all similar geographical-political descriptions. Characteristic are the titles of the particular chapters and the illustrations added, such as „Едно-земци индиане на Северна Америка“, „Мексикански господар“,

„Знание на капитол во Вашингтон“, „Черни от Западна Индия и траят хора“, „Колумб намерува Америка“.

Undoubted interest from this point of view is the fragment „Повествование за Америка“:

„1. In America (енидун) only some Indian tribes were living, which were wandering here and there till Christopher Columbus discovered it in 1492, this is almost 350 years ago. By the time of its discovery Europeans, Asians and Africans had no idea and no knowledge of the existence of such a land in the world“.

„2. Columbus went with some small ships and discovered America. When he came back to Europe, he brought the story of his discovery. A great number of people then went to that new land to see it, to gain gold and silver, and a lot of these travellers, adventures are very reliable but I have not got time to tell them now.“<sup>1</sup>

What follows is information about big cities, rivers and mountains, about population and settlement of Europeans in South and North America. Evidence of this kind form the contents of particular lessons, and their mastering is checked by asking respective questions — a repeating practice in history and geography instruction.

3. This second biggest description of America in Bulgarian is followed by 15—20 similar presentations more. Some of them are more circumstantial and strictly scientific, others are popular and narrative but all of them have educative and informative purpose and effect. Such is for instance „Кратка география. Математическа, физическа и политическа“ by I. A. Bogorov, Bucharest, 1851. The information about America in this textbook too is rather detailed. It explains that some of the inhabitants are 'native, found Indians, who have copper-red colour', others are Europeans, „originating from almost all European peoples; the rest are Negros brought as slaves to America“. The state administrative system of the USA is represented thus; „Each state is self-governing and independant, it has its own local government for its local affairs, own laws, and all of them recognize one main government consisting of an assembly of representatives of all the states, divided into Council and , and one

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<sup>1</sup> From the work quoted above, p. 186.



president of the executive power, chosen for a four years' period...“ Readable and rich in content, which in some points distinguishes it from Neophit Rilski's text, the textbook is wide-spread, especially among the Bulgarians in Romania; Bucharest — 90 copies, Ploesht — 54, Alexandria — 24, Gjurgevo — 45, Matchin — 74, Trojan — 5, Pleven — 7 and so on. The like are „Кратко землеописание. Естествено математическо и гражданско“ by Georgj Ikononov (Букурещ, 1856), „Кратка всеобща история“ by Smaragdov, translated by J. Grujev (Цариград, 1858), „Кратка география или землеописание. Составлено от Теодора Хрулева за ръководство на началните в географията ученици“ (Букурещ, 1858), „Кратка всеобща история в прости разкази. Ради юношества. Превел от руский язык Георгий С. Тошев“ (Белград, 1861).

4. In a certain connection with this type of textbooks, and sometimes under their influence, interest in America is also shown by compilers of different in genre works of popular educative literature. Their attention is drawn mainly to curious, easy to remember and characteristic details, some of which have denerally informative significance. This is demonstrated by the published 'mesetsoslovs' and calendars with popular readings. In „Месецеслов или календар вечни“ ;Букурещ, 1840) Hristophor Sichan Nikolov notes in the chapter of „Леточисление“; „Since Cristopher Columbus discovered America, 348 years have gone by. Also there (p. 91) he mentions America with a view to the number of „people who live all over the earth“, namely:

„Europe	230	million
Asia	600	..."...
Africa	110	..."...
America	40	..."...
Oceania	30	..."...

The same applies to „Знаменитаго астронома Казилмик Месацеслава предвещателний 1850“ by Anastasi P.Granitski and other similar publications. They all confirm the connection between educational literature and popular literature, which also contributes to the recognition of America in the spiritual space of our Renaissance.

4. The American mission till 70s in 19th c. As it was already mentioned, it is a form of establishment of direct links

with the unknown Bulgarian reality in America and vice versa — America among Bulgarians. Its representatives concentrate their efforts mainly in the area of the church and religious literature; of the education and educative literature, of the press, women and family. Obvious is their striving for contacts with different social strata, which they perform independantly and together with similar missions in other European and particularly Balkan countries. „In 1839 — testifies Iv. Seliminski — a great number of foreigners appeared in Turkey by various names, who became teachers and founded boarding schools. Clerics-preachers from America came to Greece. On the island of Andros a preacher of heresy appeared, Teophil Karisy by name... Letters were receives, in which our natives were urged to send their sons to these schools.“<sup>1</sup>

The missionaries and the institutions standing by them have a developed sense of opportunities which are given to them by various types of reforms in a given country. That's why they appear right after their announcement. They show ability to make use of the new conditions in the Ottoman empire in the second fourth of the previous century and their activity begins to hasten according to the essence of the reforms announced at the time. Missionaries of the Polish religious society „Christ's Ascension“ for instance make efforts to turn Odrin into a centre of uniatism and in 1863 they open there the famous Bulgarian Catholic high-school<sup>2</sup>; in many dimensions its work is commensurable with the one of Robert-College. The opportunities, favourable for such activity, draw the attention of American religious missionaris as well, who regard the indicated reforms of

<sup>1</sup> Селимински, Ив. Избрани съчинения, Цит. изд., 146.

<sup>2</sup> Елджъров, Св., 130 години от създаването на българо-католическата гимназия в Одрин, Абагар, III, 2 Febr., 1944

the Sublime Porte as good prerequisites for the increasing participation of America in the Bulgarian cultural national life.

Four directions are important for the activity of the American mission among the Bulgarians in the second and the third fourth of the 19 c.: 1. The translation, printing and circulating of the Bible; 2. Popular and school religious education; 3. Propagating Protestantism and Evangelism among the christian peoples in the empire; 4. The Publishing of newspapers and magazines with popular educative, instructive and propaganda goals. The tasks marked in this area, are inwardly related and close, the means used are different, and the consequences for the Bulgarians in that complicated period — contradictory and often contrary to their national interests in that complicated and important period. That's why it is wrong the final conclusions about the character of this well-considered, well-organized and in most cases well-carried out activity to be formed only or mostly on data for its manifestations in one of the marked fields.

The translation of the Bible and its broad usage in the native churches and schools is a foremost task of the Bulgarian philological movement almost until the middle of the previous century and later. Its broad adoption for church and educative needs facilitates the work of K.Fotinov, Neophit Rilski, P.R.Slaveikov — men of letters with professional knowledge and undoubted coincidences in their views. Also real are the differences but what is more essential are the obvious common points. Disagreements in particular problems distinguish the interests and the views of Russian, American and English missionaries committed to the work, as well as Bulgarian writers bound to them. Decisive are the coincidences in their views of the main problem — the philological and educative character of the work undertaken, necessity of a nice translation and its meaning as a proof for the cultivation of our literary language. Hence the circumstance that everything in this direction is carried out openly and attains social response.

It is not thus how the explanation of Protestantism goes off, persuading and sending young Bulgarian men and women to particular American schools, spreading paid in advance and imported in our country special literature. According to the particular surrounding

this activity can also be carried out secretly, in intentionally marked and investigated for the purpose towns and villages, families and social groups — either in North Bulgaria, where mainly the Methodists work, or in the southern parts, where mainly the congressists are active<sup>1</sup>. Often the favours of influential Bulgarians are used, especially in the beginning, when the respective missionaries are settling in this or that town or village. In a letter from 22 August, 1857 Ilija Stojanovich announces from Tarnovo: „Two weeks ago two Frenchmen came to our town“ from Istanbul with a mission in Gabrovo<sup>2</sup>. A week later: Two Protestants from Shumen came and hired a house, went to fetch their families, they had English and American origin, distributed „Gospels and other various books in Bulgarian“<sup>3</sup>. Similar is the letter of A.P. Granitski from Shumen, 21 October, 1860, to P.R. Slaveikov: „I have the honour of greeting you and of recommending you the sender of this letter\ Mr Doctor Britmen, an American, missionary in Shumen, who comes to your town for a few days“<sup>4</sup>.

The consequences of this well-planned and eager work are different: the nation uniting role of the Orthodox religion appears to be threatened, the rivalry of the Greek Phanariot clergy — favoured, the interests of Moslemism and Islam might be facilitated, the weakened patriotic positions of Catholicism in the end of 18 c. stay unaltered, and the future of the young men and women sent to America and their link with their mother land put a number of questions on their own way.

Forced to act in a complicated atmosphere but with no diversions from the preliminary chosen direction, the American missionary work acquires the character of a propaganda institution as well. In this way it inevitably provokes objections of principle and suspicions about the subject and the aims of the work done. A great part of the

<sup>1</sup> Иванова, М. „Отческата вяра ни е най-мила на сърцето. От дядо Славейков до днес — нищо ново.“, „Зора“, III, 39, 28.09.1993

<sup>2</sup> НБ „Св. св. Кирил и Методий“ Исторически архив, ф. 22, арх. ед. 4/3

<sup>3</sup> There, 12

<sup>4</sup> There, f. II B10282

press distrusts it, outstanding figures of the Renaissance are worried in Istanbul, Moscow, Odesa, Vienna, Bucharest and almost anywhere, sharply critical are the revolutionary workers, too. Having pointed out the damage from Phanariotism and some anti-Bulgarian leaning in Greek publications, Iv. Seliminski adds: „Another evil appeared here. The sermons of the American missionaries amazingly deceive the people... They have already sent to Boston 4 men, born in Bitolja, and soon 32 more will be sent to be educated in America and then to become organs of their sermons.“<sup>1</sup>

What dominates is the view that in the conditions of the time this type of propaganda is directed against the unity of Bulgarians and Christians in Turkey as a whole. It could play — emphasize authors of newspapers reports and articles — a distinguishing role with the attempts to diverse Bulgarians from the Orthodox religion, with the special schools founded in different towns and villages, sending specially chosen young men and women to American schools, with the tearing off the religious convictions and the political aspects of the national question under the conditions of active struggle against domination and enslavers<sup>2</sup>. The objections are usually sharp in manner and the publications in the press include rude qualifications which the time cannot avoid. The leading tendency is to motivate the disagreement expressed in them as a socially defended national position, what actually it is. „Let's show the hounds-papal and protestant agents, gathering round us, that the Bulgarian people does not

<sup>1</sup> Селимински, Ин. Избрани съчинения, 343

<sup>2</sup> see Стоянов, М. Начало на протестантска пропаганда в България. — Известия на ИИИ, v. 14—15, 1964; Иванова, М., the quoted article. Also the article of G.S.Rakovski „Българский народен въпрос“: „What will happen in Turkish Europe because of such religious disunity? Then the Sublime Porte would not trouble with its 'rayah' as it used to, but would trouble with France, with England, with Russia and may be with America.“ \Раковски, Г.С. Съчинения в четири тома. Втори том. Полбор и корекция проф. д-р Веселин Трайков, 1988, р. 40\ . Also Икономов, Т. „Философски и социологически съчинения“, Съст. проф. Михаил Бъчваров, С., 1983, р. 184—201, article „Протестантите и пропагандата им“

live in the deserts of hot Africa and in remote America."<sup>1</sup> — Josif Dainelov appeals to his friend G.S.Rakovski in his letter to him from 2.XII.1860.

Such tension exists all over the country and is quite high. The reasons are revelant on principle, and the resistance offered seems active, sometimes spontaneous and in separate cases — coordinated. Besides, the assistance of knowledge and intellectual preparedness is also wanted to overcome the organized propaganda with evidence, by means of conviction. Again the communities — the responsible commune governments — take the initiative. In the letter to Hristo G. Tapchileshtov from 25.IX.1864, for instance, social figures in Zheleznik share: „As we saw that the protestant and the papal adherents open schools for Bulgarians everywhere in order to reach their aim, and as in our town the protestants have a girls' schools, to be able to avoid to some extent the traps of the people's enemies, two months ago we sent three boys and three girls from the town to Belgrade with the financial aid of certain patriots for education, so that when they return some of them will be school masters, the others will be school mistresses."<sup>2</sup> In another letter from 20.X,1864: „The people is strongly indignant at the work of the enemies but takes no steps because it sees the support of the rulers."<sup>3</sup>

Extremely interesting is the brochure of Averkii P.Stojanov from the town of Dupnitsa „Глас против протестантите и тяхната ерес"<sup>4</sup>, prepared for the printer's but remaining in a manuscript. It makes claims to be an essay against the principles of Luther and Calvin but is far from the requirements of this genre. It is near to the purpose of a detailed description of the spreading of Protestantism among Bulgarians and the consequences of this but it lacks concreteness in the characterization of the very events, as well as their clas-

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<sup>1</sup> Архив на Г.С.Раковски. Том II. Писма до Раковски 1847—1860. С обяснителни бележки и под редакцията на Никола Трайков. С., 1957г р. 790

<sup>2</sup> НБ „Св.св. Кирил и Методий.“ Исторически архив, Ф., 201

<sup>3</sup> There, ф. I A202

<sup>4</sup> There, ф., II A4715

sification according to their importance. The work is an outburst of the patriotism and the care of its author for the unity of the Bulgarians and their ability to resist the threatening danger. That should explain to a certain extent the epithets and the emotional attributes used in the two basic parts — the first, which is negation of Protestantism in general, and the second, designed as glorification of the Orthodox faith.

Well traced out in the documents of those years is also the protection of Protestantism as a kind of creed, the benefit from the churches and schools built for the Bulgarians, the essence of the circulated books, the life and the activity of eminent protestants, the attachment of the American missionaries to God's truths and due to this — to the Bulgarians. Very important from this point of view is the publication „Протестантството с човечество и християнство“ (Виена, 1867), written probably by A. Tsanov, already mentioned above, signing as „Your fellow countryman“. In the expressed polar views P.R. Slaveikov's tolerant disagreement stands out: „It is good to say it once for all, and *most of all to the countries, which like taking care of our interests...* Everyone knows the dead-locks the catholic clergy got into once upon a time but no sensible person could censure the catholic religion which is professed by 200 million people. The Greek church as well is governed many times by unauthoritative persons... It does not mean *we should deny our mother land faith and everything which is the dearest thing to the heart.*“<sup>1</sup> (emphasis by Ilija Konev).

This is a right view indeed which deserves the recognition of the part of the opponents, too. Our social thought reaches it due to the great worldly knowledge of P.R. Slaveikov, due to his accomplishments and wisdom, typical for his social conduct. It is based on knowledge and respect for different religions which is really true to the vocation to cultivate religious tolerance and human virtues. Certainly of constructive importance are also the personal relations of the writer with eminent workers of the American and European mis-

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<sup>1</sup> ИВАНОВ, М. quoted article.



sions, some of which have probably paid attention to his statements about the situation of the Bulgarians and the harmful consequences of their activity.

In separate publications about this point the authors show their inclination to explain the manifested distrust to the missionaries as a characteristic of the Bulgarians and „small peoples“ suspiciousness, as a fear of discussions because of the lack of conditions for equivalent popular persuasion in this area, as a shortage of deep historical and theoretical knowledge of the religion and creeds. There is something acceptable in such a thesis: The works about history and theory of religious doctrines are few. However, the special thing about this thesis is the wrong part in its factual, national psychological and instructive nature. Articles on some problems of Christianity are known as early as the beginning stages of the Renaissance — for instance Krastjo Pejkitich's „Огледало на истината“ or the translated work by Sophroni Vrachanski about the three religions. Irrefutable is also the skill of the educated Bulgarians of discuss, relying on what is rationally and nationally justified in general or at a given historical moment in particular. Together with the all out philological discussions from the second and the third fourth of the previous century, the lively conversations about Protestantism and other religions spread among the Bulgarians display some of the greatest merits of the Bulgarian social thought from that time, which is still not clarified in its character and completeness. This is independant of the fact that the religious propaganda activity of the American missionaries is to a certain extent a surprise for the Bulgarians, it finds them unprepared which explains the sharpness in there spontaneous reaction. When they start their resistance mainly with the means of the press and the particular steps for the education of the youth, they face a constructed network of central and peripheral units of the propaganda that inevitably perturbs the Orthodox consciousness and creed of the Bulgarians in this or that region. Even Petko Slaveikov's opinion, which is correct on principle, in such atmosphere might be partly understood and might stay aside of the existing danger that the propaganda creeds may weaken the national unity

and its efforts for national liberty — political and spiritual. The notion for such a danger gives birth to a great extent to the resistance shown everywhere which does not mean disagreement with the ideas of the social worker, publicist and writer Petko Slaveikov — one of the most tolerant personalities of the Renaissance.

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Let's get back to the problem about the Bible and the other activities, typical not only for the American missionary work. The translation and the circulation of the Holy Book \here I mean the New Testament\ in many European countries \including Bulgaria\ is done with the direct or indirect assistance of the existing at that time biblical communities<sup>1</sup>. In the second volume of my monograph „Българското възрождане и Просвещението“ I emphasized on the circumstances here, which after the 20-s of the previous century orientated the educated men of letters to the accomplishment of this not only prestigious but also responsible task — the translation of the Bible. Also there I compared the language characteristics of some of the most important Bulgarian editions of the New Testament and further I tried to ground the most important thing — their connection with the program goals of the philological movement. The basic Bulgarian translations which illustrate the intervention of the missions in general and of the American one in particular in completing this prestigious task as far as the Bulgarian language was concerned, are the following:

1. The New Testament. Namely the four Gospels of the four evangelists translated from Old Greek into Bulgarian which is now spoken in Bulgaria... Bucharest, 1828, Translators: Peter Sapounov of Trjavnna and Seraphim Eskozacharene.

2. The New Testament of God, Our Jesus Christ. Now translated from Slav into Bulgarian... Smirna, 1840. Translator: Neophit Rilski.

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<sup>1</sup> Useful information on the problem in Неврокопски митрополит Пимен. В началото беше словото, С. 1988, p. 174—212

3. The New Testament of God, our Jesus Christ... New York, 1867. American Bible Society printing establishment.

Translators: K. Fotinov, P.R. Slaveikov, Sichan Nikolov with cooperation and initiation of Elias Riggs and Dr. Albert Longue. Second edition, 1867, third 1872. P.R. Slaveikov's printing establishment.

The participation of American men of Letters and missionaries was inspired by the common purpose of all national translations of the Bible, i.e. recognition of the Bulgarian language in the country and among other nations; acquisition of sacred truths, internal harmony and stability in the respective language development. It is also essential that this kind of participation is not simply an incorporation in the initiated enterprise (preliminary talks, grounding of ideas, supplying means and other facilities), but it comprises the completion of the task itself as well. All these factors confirm the common origin of the purposes of the American missionary work and the Bulgarian Philological movement, as well as its services to the international recognition of our native literary language in the second quarter of the previous century.

The first two translations of the New Testament from 1828 and 1840 do not carry the initial evidence that the Bulgarian language is able to create religious works with a universal purpose. Sophronii Vrachanski's „Неделник“ from 1806 serves this aim to a great extent. It is a book which brings together all the Sunday gospels used previously.

Moreover, it can be assumed that the highly professional quality of the work, its impressive poligraphic layout, its beautiful language and the fact that it is well received by the Bulgarians bring to the surface the idea of translating the New Testament. Logically, the first talks about realising the idea are conducted with men of letters from the Bulgarian colony in Roumania (Bucharest) where 15 years ago Sophronii negotiates and realises the publication of „Неделник“. The translations of the Holy Book mentioned above (the first two in particular) have the following significance as well: They occupy a central place in the Renaissance in general and until the middle of

the 19th century in particular; thus enriching the role of the translation for the international recognition of the Bulgarian literary language. This is an important issue, there is no doubt; however it remains beyond the theme of the present research.

The truth about the American missionary activities among the Bulgarian people at the time of the Renaissance is many-sided and is not exhausted by the translation of the „New Testament“ alone. It also includes the „Зорница“ monthly magazine (I, 1864, XII, 1878) edited by Albert Longue and the „Зорница“ weekly newspaper (1876—1878), issued by the American Evangelistic Society with G.L. Bungton as an editor. These are, genuinely speaking, the first foreign periodicals in Bulgarian from that remote epoch; the editors, financing, circulation, their programme and purpose are all in the American missionary experience and attempts. An advantage for the publisher, no doubt, is the orientation to a magazine for the Bulgarian children at a time when readings for children are still at a first step of development, exemplified by the activities of Petko Slaveikov and a few of his contemporaries. They have realised the existing gap in our literature which opens a possibility for proposeful contribution. The magazine turns out, however, to be an understanding of little result. Recognized Bulgarian men of letters do not accept it positively!<sup>1</sup> .

The most probable reason for this is the stated intention of the editors to influence the adolescent generation to such educational and practical tasks which did not match the leading ideals of the Renaissance.

The assumed critical position is influenced by the aims of the opposition which in all times begins and ends with negation of such foreign influences. In an American religious magazine such as „Зорница“ this position could be successfully applied as a consequence of already exalted suspiciousness to all circumstances which

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<sup>1</sup> Karavelov calls the magazine „porridge for mice“ which the Bulgarian people do not need. Raiko Zhinzifov, Nesho Bonchev and a few their contemporaries of theirs have a negative attitude towards the magazine.

endanger the bringing together and liberation of the Bulgarian people. Not by chance some critical assessments of the magazine seem more biased and adjectival than substantial and well-grounded with the means of professional criticism. They do not reveal the shortcomings of the magazine due to which it fails to be as successful as previously expected and thus seriously criticised and rejected. The main reason for this are as follows. 1. The editor of the magazine underestimates the intellectual abilities and literary interests of the Bulgarian society of the third quarter of the last century. 2. With the very first issues the magazine turns out to be far from the essential questions of the Bulgarian reality and this gap is considerably broadened in the 70s. 3. The magazine disregards the national ideals and patriotic views about education, it introduces a different symbolic system in children's mentality; it does not stress upon the ideals of the liberated world and the ideals of those under the Ottoman yoke, in particular. 4. There are no significant publications about the Bulgarian history and culture, school and education; no pictures, illustrations and important facts about the lives of historical figures; the magazine lacks national space and native atmosphere — two important requirements not only for the children literature in the Renaissance and the Bulgarian children literature, but in general. 5. The purely religious readings which are the essence of the magazine are in the most naive and do not dwell on essential questions. It is worth adding that the well-established in our own literature high esteem of the children newspapers in England and America is not a characteristic feature of that magazine. „Out there they publish them“, Karavelov writes, „with ultimate carefulness“. and he adds: „In England and America pedagogics is the concern of the purest, the most honest and most capable people“!<sup>1</sup>

The available facts about the personality and professional culture of doctor Longue, the editor of the magazine, can hardly highlight such shortcomings. As a lecturer at Robert College as well as through

<sup>1</sup> Каравелов, Л., Ботев, Хр. Знаеш ли ти, кои сме? Неиздадени фейлетони. Редакция и коментар на проф. Александър Бурмов, С., 1947, 159.

his direct enlightening activities among the Bulgarian people ever since 1897 he has achieved exceptional results on Bulgarian studies; he masters the Bulgarian language, establishes close relations with Bulgarian intellectual people in Constantinople and a number of Bulgarian towns, he enjoys and relies on P.R. Slaveikov's friendship, loyalty and cooperation. The leader of the Bulgarian colony in Constantinople gives credit to him many a time and during different periods of his life; the former entrusts the latter with his own scripts, and in 1876 even dedicates a poem to him. „I feel very sorry“, he writes in his letter of 7th July, 1878, „that I could not find time to come again to Robert College so that Mr. Longue and I could have long debates. However, I will try to keep a written correspondence with him going about how things are getting on, provided he does me the honour to ask me what he needs to know being a Bulgarian-phil?“<sup>1</sup> (emphasis mine — Ilija Konev).

In 1869 in issue № 22 of the „България“ newspaper doctor Longue publishes a letter on the Church Question which has been discussed on the pages of the „Цариградски вестник“; he translates and publishes „Разговор между двама приятели върху душевни предмети“ (1863), „Малечкий Хенрих и неговият Бавач“ (1864), „Колибарската дъщеря“ (1864), „Пътешествието от този свят до онзи“ (1864) — all these are examples of the educational readings used at that time with a certain moralising tendency. As it was previously noted in 1870 at Robert College Dr. Longue delivers a number of lectures on „Славяните и българите“ issued the same year and in a separate volume with the obvious cooperation and benevolence of P.R. Slaveikov. On 25th May 1874 at the celebration of the first apostles of Slavonic education he gives a speech and impresses the students, lecturers and guests of Robert College. Different newspapers inform the readers about his contribution: delivered lectures; meetings with Bulgarian people, private and formal visits, books

<sup>1</sup> Славейков, П.Р. Съчинения, Том осми. Под редакцията на Соня Баева, С., 1982, p. 248, 252, 256, 299. I could not find out if such a correspondence really exists. It could answer a lot of essential questions.

published; propaganda in northern Bulgaria and elsewhere; his final decision to settle in Constantinople, etc.

In a letter of 14th March, 1877, a contemporary notifies: „In Pazardgik Dr. Longue wants to open a school for young girls and I'm very happy about it“<sup>1</sup>

His name is connected with crucial periods of the history of the Tserovo village, Pazardgik district. It was resorted after the April Rebellion when „burnt down and destroyed“ because of mass participation of the local population in the liberation struggles. The Protestants in the native village of the opera singer Elena Nikolai, well-known all over the world had their own church as well as „an independent school of their own until 1921 with several teachers. Five or six residents of Tserovo, namely four boys and one girl studied their higher education in the USA with scholarships from the „Dr. Longue“ Foundation. Among them are professor Sharenkov, an economist and professor Zlatka Kraivcheva“<sup>2</sup>

Let me refer to a private letter of Dr. Longue from 27th September, 1865, Constantinople. It reflects his cooperation in providing Bulgarian students with scholarships at Robert College. It is also worth in another respect: if the letter was not only written but created by him as well, we will be right to conclude that only in 1805 he had a through command of the Bulgarian Language. Here is its short content: „that's how things are: I posted the licence from the school about sending six young boys on half a salary, Petko in particular whose post was previously settled. These six posts are for the six boys from Mannia. They have not arrived yet but everybody ensures that they will come. The school headmaster is not sure if he can accept one more, because the whole three salaries for the six boys have to be collected from certain sponsors and the headmaster is obliged to give account about each student“<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> НБ „Св.св. Кирил и Методий“, Исторически архив, ф. II А 2476.

<sup>2</sup> This fact is certified by Mrs. Stojanka Michailova in a letter to me from 17th June, 1994. In it she writes about other memories about Protestantism in her own village. I avail myself of the opportunity to thank her for her readiness to share these data.

<sup>3</sup> НБ „Св.св. Кирил и Методий“, Исторически архив, ф. II А. 2079.



All the facts mentioned so far do not only confirm Dr. Longue's recognition among the Bulgarian men of letters and the Bulgarians in general but they trace the most essential directions in his work in the Bulgarian studies. Dr. Longue is a central figure in establishing of the Bulgarian-American cultural interactions and an example of how significant the personal line is in the interaction of nations and cultures. His achievements exemplify the best the American enlighteners in Bulgaria do during the second and third quarter of the last century and thus enter the history of these relationship.

As an editor of the „Зорница“ magazine, however Dr. Longue stands in a different light. One can see the discrepancy between the Slavist enlightener and the editor-propagandist of certain religious teaching and concepts of child-raising. The former attracts the attention of many Bulgarians and impresses them with his understanding about the discussed issues. The latter being left aside is not commented even in the most critical reports about the magazine. In this mess of unclear details one thing is for sure, namely, the „Зорница“ magazine sticks to deliberately selected religious, enlightening and social educational subject matter which in most cases has a naive interpretation. The thematical and problematic context as a rule is separated from the leading scientific, cognitive and educational ideas of the Enlightenment and the second half of 19th century in particular. Issued in the course of 12 years the magazine does not set essential problems of the religious teachings in a historically backgrounded theoretical plan comfortable to children's acquisition. It does not issue portraits of strugglers and martyrs of Christianity. It does not illustrate leading Christian ideas. Such publications were much needed. An indirect support of what has been said is Todor Ikonov's article „Протестантите и проповедите им“ which happens to be a historical philosophical treaty of great importance. At that time the expected explanation that the magazine is for children could not possibly be convincing, even because of the fact that a number of periodicals (and those for children in particular) have been used by various ages at the time.

In correspondance with a setteed characteristic it is useful to view „Зорница“ in respect of the American magazines closer in ideas and themes. It is only these that we can thoroughly range over the difference in the stated initial vision of the editors about its role as a reading for the Bulgarian children.

What has been said so far is enough for one to come to the following conclusion. Pursuing its goals the magazine does not correspond to the Enlightenment ideas of the Bulgarian society and pedagogical lines of children literature. Its long existence in the history of Constantinopole periodical press is due to its financial independence mostly and the circumstances in Constantinopole but not to any interest on the side of the Bulgarians.

The analysis of the „Зорница“ newspaper leads to different conclusions. It is addressed to adults and is edited by T.L. Byngton parallel to Botev's „Знаме“ newspaper, Karavelov's „Знание“ magazine, „Читалище“, „Периодическо списание“ and other Bulgarian periodicals in Romania and Constantinopole. The above enumerated periodicals give the aspect of the Bulgarian periodical press in 70s of last century. Their effect is constant and wide and no periodical enterprise of the last pre-liberation years could not be judged outside it. „Зорница“'s thematical scope is rather large: political news, articles about the history of Christianity, interpretation of the Gospels, reports about scientific achievements, on education in Europe and America, pedagogical readings and advice. Dr. Elias Riggs (one of the most active contributors of the newspaper) writes notes to folk songs, his wife writes letters with advice to mothers, and Dr. Longue publishes articles on the matter of natural science. One can mention a number of professionally written articles: „Размишленията на М. Гизо върху Християнството“, „Началото на Християнството“, „Християнството и деветнадесетий век“, „Християнството и вещественото Благоденствие“, „Естествените науки опровергават ли Библията“, „Нравственото съвършенство на Исуса Христа“, „Науката опровергава ли евангелието“, „Най-висшата цивилизация“, „Първобитните жители на Съединените държави“, „Древната и днешната свобода“, „Осемнадесети век по френски

истории“, „Напредъкът в Америка“, „Образованието в Америка“, „Образованието в Русия“, „Образованието в Германия“, „Образованието в Шотландия“, etc.

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These are problematic articles, rather long and publishes in the course of several consequent issues, which is the practise of the Bulgarian periodicals at that time („Македония“, „Читалище“, „Свобода“, „Знание“). Similar are the feature articles about noted personalities – Alexander of Macedonia, Anibal, Julius Caesar, Napoleon Bonaparth, Copernicus, Peter the Great, and some essays by

S. Panaretov, a lecturer at Robert College. The religious Protestant idea of the newspaper do not interfere with these publications and do not oblige their authors to comply with it. The opposite is more close to the truth. The authors mainly draw the reader's attention, make the newspaper acceptable not to the supporters of Protestantism alone, strengthen its influence and give it a popular informative style much needed at the time. In these respects the newspaper is in harmony with certain blocks in the „Знание“ magazine, and other periodicals from the 70s, which publish problematic and professionally written articles on education, social progress and scientific achievements in different countries, religions. Having drawn a lesson from the shortcomings of the „Зорница“ newspaper the editor of the „Зорница“ weekly has, no doubt, a better idea of the educational level and enlightening interests of the Bulgarians, as well as of the scientific-cognitive goals of the Bulgarian periodical press of 70s of the last century.

It's not by chance that the „Зорница“ newspaper comes as close as possible to the respective Bulgarian issues and mainly to the informative magazine of Karavelov's „Знание“. This closeness is in itself of interest to the researchers as far as two of its advantages are concerned: 1. It illustrates with dates the last and in its essence positive period in the long manifestations of the American Mission in Bulgaria before the Liberation; 2. In the second quarter of last century the translation of the „New Testament“ goes far beyond the narrow pragmatic religious understanding and gains the role of a national deed. Just in the same way the „Зорница“ newspaper leads the American Missionaries to the Enlightenment ideals and needs of the Bulgarian society. Yet, the characteristic distance of the „Зорница“ magazine from the revolutionary periodical press has been preserved, and all the more from the dynamic political events and national struggles for liberation. The editor of the „Зорница“ newspaper T.L. Byngton and his educated contributors, especially D-r A. Longue and D-r Elias Riggs witness the dramatical events from 1876–1878 know the tragedy of Batak and heroic deeds of Shipka, the military event, in Bosnia and Hercegovina. However, in these

publications one can not feel even the slightest echo of the agitation, protests and humane judgements of distinguished European social figures as Jenarius Aloysius McGahan. They even lack the slightest attention with which the Bulgarian periodical press reflects the changes on the policy of the USA as far as Turkey is concerned and the reforms on the Balkans. „The Porte steps back, its failure is sure... Moreover, the Porte has come to odds with one of those great forces which stands no nonsense“, points out Hristo Botev. „This force is North America and the reason for the quarrel is the following incident. For some time now the Protestantism has been being spread among the Turkish population in Syria. For the purpose the American missionaries have establishes several schools. The grand vizir ordered these schools to be closed and the teachers put into pti-son...“<sup>1</sup>

There is no comment on Botev's note about Americans helping a Bulgarian woman not to be forcefully turned Turk. In general, one can feel a certain cautiousness on behalf of the magazine to reflect and all the more dwell on manifestations of the changing century – old opposition „enslaver – enslaved“. It is quite possible that some letters or memoir notes by E. Riggs and his co-workers reflect impressions and judgements of this kind. It is possible. However, what I mean is their published works and the stand of their periodicals.

Despite the undeniable distance, it is a fact that the „Зорница“ newspaper succeeded in illminating the remoteness of the preceding magazine having the same title from the acute problems of the reality in our century. T.L. Byngton's newspaper is close to the style and directions of the Bulgarian social thoughts with its high national and educational concepts. The visits of the American ambassador to Bulgaria, Skyler and D.A. McGahan to different Bulgarian villages and towns and that he witnesses one of the indisputable achievements of Bulgarian education are eagerly reflected in the „Зорница“ newspaper. On the occasion of his short stay in the town of Sliven McGahan

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<sup>1</sup> Ботев, Хр. Съчинения. Съставителство и редакция: Стефана Тариска, Николай Жечев, Том втори. С., 1966, 392 р.

writes: „... Skyler called a boy at the age of 7 or so, with sparkling black eyes and dictated a phrase in Bulgarian to him. The boy wrote it proudly on the blackboard. His tough, rounded handwriting could ashame anyone of us. After that Skyler examined a whole class in geography and another in mathematics and found out that the children were well-educated and answer the wuestions with no confusion...” In my opinion, McGahan goes on, „Sliven can rival similar towns in England and France in pedagogical and any other aspect. What is more one should not forget that all achievements of the Bulgarians in respect of the childraising are not a result of Government decrees or regulations of school council. Voluntary taxes imposed by the people itself sponsored the schools and every Sunday a meeting was summoned in the church for this purpose. So this people was called barbarian, their villages were burnt down and robbed, thousands of women and children were killed and dishonoured<sup>1</sup>.

Having lived for years among the Bulgarians, the editor of the „Зорница“ newspaper and his educated co-workers view them, their ideals and achievements with respect.

The publications in the newspaper and its renewed programme are reflectes together with the results and needs of the Bulgarian school, the Bulgarian education in general. And if despite all, the realised closeness remains restricted, the main reason is that the goals of the American Evangelistic Society are only partially acceptable for the Bulgarian reality. In the course of its work in Bulgaria this society makes positive changes on its approach and forms of activities and yet sticks to its starting points. These last did not allow for a better synchronisation with the major and irrevocable in themselves trends of the Bulgarian cultural-national development.

5. Robert College. I do not intend to follow the whole history of this prestigious American institution in „the East“ founded to meet the enlightenment and educational needs of the Christian peoples within the Ottoman empire and outside it. My task is to roughly lo-

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<sup>1</sup> Quotation after: Костадинов, Д. Дженариус Алоизиус Макгахан освободителя. – Славянски вестник, брой 3–4, март–април 1993, с. 8.

cate it on the Bulgarian – American interrelations being established at that time. In correspondence to this I begin with the most general purpose of Robert College in South-eastern Europe, i.e. one of its most important characteristic features is an educational institution. In an announcement from 1863 about the forthcoming opening ceremony of the college one can read the following: „The purpose of these colleagues is to provide these countries with the kind of education which is better – grounded and more scientifically based than the one they have had to this very day from another Christian institution in the East<sup>1</sup>

In his speech of the Bulgarian graduates of the college in 1871 D-r Wood points out vits wide and multinational purpose: Robert College „does not aim at private or selfish interests, it was founded to encourage the mental and moral interests of the society here in Turkey and in the whole of the East (emphasis – Il. Konev).. It is trues that the flag of Christianity fluttered over these walls as it should be because everything that urges one towards the good and humane is connected with Christianity<sup>2</sup>.

Petko Slaveikov's thoughts follow the same course. He attends the celebration as a prominent Bulgarian writer and social figure mainly and because his two sons are students at the College. Deeply impressed and excited at the success of the Bulgarian graduates Slaveikov regrets not beings able to express his deepest gratitude in English. He underlines the useful role of the College for the people (the college being an educational institution for the Bulgarians). He advises the graduates not to regard the school as „a foreign achievement“ because: „An institution having educated several Bulgarian scientists in the course of 2 or 3 years and sent them to work for the mental progress of their own people today sends 5 more and will send still more in the time to come. This same institution cannot be considered foreign. It is theirs and the students of all the nationalities (emphasis by Il. Konev.) who are not great in number can enjoy it

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<sup>1</sup> „Съветник“ I, 19, 20, VI. 1863.

<sup>2</sup> „Македония“, 30, 27.VII.1871.



and call it their own... The school of Robert College will have a respectable place in the history of the Bulgarian literature (emphassi by Il. Konev). And he ends its speech with the following wishes: While the Bulgarian youth work on their gratitude towards this school let them keep on trying to promote such institutions on their native land which institutions may be viewed as branches of Robert College.<sup>1</sup>

Three years later Dr. Washburn attends the usual celebration of the brothers Kyrilus and Methodius at the college. In his speech he points out the multinational inclination of the college, and just as Slaveikov he underlines the civil and patriotic views of its students. „Your enlighteners Cyrilus and Methodius“, he reminds, „studied and got their education in Constantinople not because they wanted to boast with their education and brilliant mental abilities nor aimed they at taking personal advantage; the contrary, their goal was other people's benefit, they wanted to convert those in rude and primitive idolatry into the Christian faith. So, having in mind the glorious and respectable example of your enlighteners you have never to forget that your education is not for your own benefit and treasure only. If you are so selfishly motivated your place is not in Robert College“<sup>2</sup>

As one can see the international importance of Robert College, on the one hand, and its „worthy place in the history of Bulgarian literature“, on the other hand, are both very significant characteristic features of this American institution which is the only one of its kind „in the whole of the East“. It is them that determine its role in strengthening America's position in the spiritual space of the Bulgarian Renaissance.<sup>3</sup> The competitive examination system for letting young people at the age of 15 to the college, the curriculum ranging

<sup>1</sup> The same book. It is remarked in the report that these words of Slaveikov were applauded and his speech translated into English by D-r A. Longue.

<sup>2</sup> Levant Times, VI, 20, 25.V.1974.

<sup>3</sup> This is the only aspect that interests me. The history of the college and its thorough motivated assessment are not a subject matter of the present paper.

different spheres of knowledge<sup>1</sup>, the report on the USA and education in particular greater consideration of Christianity and the Celebration of enlighteners Cyrilus and Methodius – 11th May, the relation of the academic work to the Bulgarian history and the problems of their cultural-national development recently, the connections of some lectures with the Bulgarian colony in Constantinople – these are only some of the characteristic features of the college making it a prestigious American educational institution showing definite positive attitude towards the Bulgarian reality in its broadest sense. Washburn, mentioned above, said in the congratulation speech already cited: „Remember, one who does not have respect and glory for the great men of one's people, is not worth being called one of this people and finally, do not forget that being a human proper means working equally for the following: nationality, faith and truth.“ I can't but quote the warm words of Zhizhin, a Georgian lecturer.

„Today you're celebrating the memory of people having lived and worked thousands of years ago. You're also celebrating your liberation from a foreign religion. This is an indication that your people strives at a new life. You remember your past, make use of your present, and, I believe, you will understand your fortune, too.“<sup>2</sup>.

Neither the American missionaries among the Bulgarians nor the „Зорница“ magazine did show the connection between their own understanding of the Bulgarians needs, and the humanism of the Enlightenment as well as their national ideals of the Renaissance. To a great extent this explains the constant interest on behalf of Bulgari-

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<sup>1</sup> The „Македония“ newspaper from 27th July, 1871 gives information about the examination at Robert College and names the following disciplines: „The attention of those who were present was mostly drawn by the graduating class consisting of five people only, the five of them being Bulgarian. They surprised the audience with their answer of all the subject they were examined, i.e. „History of Civilisation“, „Philosophy of History“, „International Law“, „Mental And Moral Philosophy“.

<sup>2</sup> „Македония“, II, 9, 20.V.1872.

ans to the purposes and successes of the college: the most numerous among the graduates of the college are Bulgarian (at the end of the 1870-1871 academic year they are 40), some of the college graduates become noted Bulgarian social figures.

The announcements and reports about the college in the periodicals are positive and there are no negations and prejudices. Indicative are the topics of the reports of the students and lecturers, members of the students' circle founded on 12th Sept, 1869. They comprise the contents of a characteristic of that epoch document and that is why I enclose a list of them as they were published in the periodical press at the time:

1. G.D. Ikonov. The Reasons for the Success and Misfortune of A Society.

2. G.H. Dimitrov. On the Status of the Greeks in 1869.

3. G.St. Tomov. On the Benefit of Student's Life.

4. P.V. Gorbanov (lecturer): What is the Essence of the Education itself.

5. H. Sterbakov: A Historical and Political Description of Constantinople.

6. G. Ikonov: (On Education).

7. P.V. Gorbanov: How to Acquire Knowledge.

8. P.V. Gorbanov: How the Human's Character is Formed.

9. G.K. Stoilov: On the Use Of Reading and the Way to Do it.

10. R. Panaretov: The History of Peter the Great.

11. Iv. P. Slaveikov: On Hanibal's Deeds.

12. Iv.P. Slaveikov: The History of the Carthaginian Military Leader.

13. P.V. Gorbanov: On the Development of the Society So Far and Which Direction to Follow from Now on.

14. P.V. Gorbanov: (Seven Lectures on Questions of the Bulgarian History).

15. G.H. Dimitrov: (Three Lectures on Questions of the Serbs' History).

16. R. Panaretov: (Two Lectures on Questions of the Walachian History. The same author has completed his lectures on Peter the Great).

17. Iv.S. Geshev: (Lectures on Napoleon Bonaparth).

18. K. Kalchev. On Celebrating St. St. Cyril and Methodius; On the status in Bulgaria.<sup>1</sup>

The Bulgarian students graduates having the degree of Bachelor in 1869 give similar speeches:

1. Naiden Nikolov (from Bourgas): The Importance of Religion, for the Progress of A State; Trade and the Need To Develop It for the Success of a People.

2. Jordan Ikonov (from Elena): The Duties of the Masters Towards Its Subjects and Respectively those of the Subjects Towards the Masters.

3. Stefan Tomov (from Kotel); The Importance, Significance and Use of Acquiring a Good Character, The Use of Learning History.

4. Peter Mateev (from Kotel): Which Are the Necessary Conditions For the Progress of A State; The Yoke and Its Origin and Consequences.

5. Todor Ivanov Zhabarov (from Shumen): Freedom of Conscience; The Importance of Mathematics For Training the Brains, Improving Seafaring and Exactness of Astronomical Science.<sup>2</sup>

The lectures delivered on the exam at Robert College on 13 in July 1872 are similar in subject matter:

1. Edward Bias: National Monuments.

2. Iv.D. Geshov: The Real Bliss.

3. D. Ikonov: The Consequences of the Last French-Prussian fight.

4. P. Dimitrov: The Influence of the Reformation on the European Civilisation.

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<sup>1</sup> See the „Македония“ newspaper, IV, 85, 29.IX.1871. Писмо до редактора на вестника за образуването на дружество и неговата дейност.

<sup>2</sup> Македония, III, 35, 26.VII.1869.

5. St. Kambourov: The Bulgarians' Progress.

6. K. Kalchov: The Struggle as a Component of the European Civilisation.<sup>1</sup>

It is enough to read the list mentioned above and the spirits of every Bulgarian go high as in the „Under the Yoke“ when the annual exam of Rada's students is carried out and I should say, in all celebrations at the Bulgarian school during the Renaissance. The atmosphere at the time of the exams at Robert College and the celebrations in memory of the saint brothers Cyril and Methodius radiate patriotic impulses. The lectures delivered at the time have similar importance. They are an expression of a comparatively high level of education as well as evidence of the accumulated knowledge of the students in different spheres: general and Bulgarian history, pedagogics, moral education, religion, state system, mathematics, trade, sociology, civilisation. Of great importance are the links of the students with their country and the problems of their national history; their sense of responsibility before the people; their professional development as personalities. All these enrich the characteristics of Constantinople as a centre of the new Bulgarian social thought and of Robert College as a first American education institution in the East having contributed to the early evolution of the cultural communication between two peoples who are historically and geographically distant from one another and to the mutuality between the Christian peoples in that part of Europe. One can definitely say now: The range of the established Bulgarian-American relations at the time would have been narrow and would have lacked influence in one of the leading spheres of the Bulgarian cultural-national life, i.e. education and formation of the new Bulgarian intellectuals, without the existence of Robert College and the educational programme.

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<sup>1</sup> Македонија, VI, 18, 25.V.1872.

## 6. Necessary Conclusions

Three are the characteristic features determining the essence and aspects of the early foundation period of the Bulgarian-American cultural contacts, i.e.: the historical background of their foundation, their significance for overcoming of the orientation to Europe and finally, their differentiation as part of a constant process in time. The first characteristic shows that the contacts discussed here are neither predetermined in the Middle Ages, nor by tribal similarity in the origin of the two peoples. They start and revolve in the second and third quarters of last century. At the time these two cultures (the American and the Bulgarian) make successful steps to each other. Typical in the beginning are the common Enlightenment leanings and tendencies, the big differences in the historical fates and state formations of the USA and Bulgaria respectively, unequal possibilities for parallel manifestations of the Bulgarian and American lines. Despite the detaining effect of such differences it is important that both lines develop in content, direction, influence and in the condition of public knowledge.

The data available now give reason to talk about a certain advantage of the Bulgarian line: it is notable for more and many-sided information; it brings to full completion the building up of the notions about three fields at least of the American reality – education, prominent statesmen in the USA and special features of the social order; it introduces as well examples of the American literature. This conclusion remains valid until the American notions about the Bulgarians, their history and culture is studied with the necessary attention. As a result of the cognitive initiative manifested by the both sides the USA enter into the universal notions of the Bulgarian from the age of the Renaissance and this widens his view of the world. Many of the achievements and most of all the signs of the humanistic reciprocity in the establishing contacts are directly connected with the motives and characteristics of the cognitive initiative mentioned above. It is open to the history and the modern life of the two peoples;

it is imbued with the ideas of social progress and it remains under their influence and at the same time it preserves its integrity till the end of the period. Everything which runs contrary to these basic in their essence differences meets the disapproval of the individual and of certain milieus – the Bulgarians reject some of the initiatives and activities of the mission and the Americans support their striving after freedom and independence, after national, political and spiritual identity. And this, in fact, is the leading tendency of the initial Bulgarian-American contacts established in the atmosphere of the Enlightenment and Renaissance. Clearly confirmed by some of the most essential manifestations by the end of the period this tendency brings the Bulgarian-American contacts to 'the doorstep' of a new historical epoch – new for Bulgaria, for the Balkans and for Europe – which started with the signing of the contracts in San Stefano and Berlin. The second peculiarity refers to the out-of-Europe relations of the Bulgarian culture as a form and means of overcoming the orientation to Europe in its Bulgarian, national and wider range, on the one hand, and for the consolidation of the positive elements in this culture and its view of the world. This is a principal issue having many dimensions all reaching to the so called 'general orientation to Europe or Westernization' during the 18th–19th century and to the increasing after The Second War American, Japanese, Indian or Chinese 'entering in Europe' as some authors put it. Of special interest to me in this work is one of these dimensions – the spatial widening of the volume of relations, contacts and interactions which have never been only literary or cultural even when they were realized as such. This aspect is essential and results from the nature of the Humanistic trends in the Arts, education, science and culture in general. These trends do not bear the isolation no matter whether it is spatial or ideological; they are opened to the world and the nations; they send their messages to them; they grant their achievements and successes to them and they take their contacts with them as a prime source for their inner enrichment and as a condition for a constructive impact.



The examples reviewed in this paper definitely reveal the following: the free USA and the enslaved Bulgaria lay bridges to other worlds of which future decades will make use for the increasing needs of the new times. What is important is that this is achieved already during the Renaissance and that is at the very beginning of the 19th century. It is then and in some cases even in the transitory period that the Bulgarians establish initial relations with the Indian, Chinese, Egyptian, Japanese and many other national cultures in Asia and Africa. These relations do not show any opposition to the European culture and this is, no doubt, important for the characteristics of the overcoming of the orientation to Europe carried out through them. At a later stage such tendencies come into life but the aims of the Enlightenment and the Renaissance do not create the climate they need to flourish. That is why the flagging of the orientation to Europe connected to certain extent with the so called 'Europization of the Earth' answers the necessity of mutual contacts and enrichment of cultures and nations with different histories and spiritual identity. The relations that were being established between Bulgaria and the USA are an isolated example of such overcoming of the orientation to Europe: the relatively great information about America in Bulgaria as well as the involvement of governmental institutions in the American presence on the Balkans do not defy the independence of the Bulgarian principle at the time. On the contrary it challenges it and what was achieved in this direction should be dealt with in details. The expected conclusions will be much more convincing if they are compared to all the initial contacts which the Bulgarians establish (during the Renaissance and most of all during the last century) with other nations and cultures outside Europe. What is known for sure so far is that the Bulgarian-American contacts have in this context a central place – both with their inner and outer characteristics.

The third peculiarity. From the 80s of the last century when the American interest in the Bulgarian translation of the New Testament becomes popular among the educated Bulgarians to the end of the Renaissance when the „Зорница“ newspaper is still in circulation the

contacts between the two nations assume the characteristics of a well-formed initial stage in the continuing history of the Bulgarian-American relations and interactions. Irrevocable characteristics of this stage are: the time of a total mutual lack of information is far behind; there exists already an increasing interest in the history and culture of the two nations; there is available information about achievements in different spheres of life in both countries; the first accute disagreements which appear at that time are settled and overcome by consolidating the Bulgarian national identity in those decades and by the respect which prominent American activists showed to the liberty-loving ideals of the Bulgarians. In the context of those contacts the prerequisites are created for the independent and consistent development in several directions: the educational, the literary, the political and the widely social ones; the role of the individual with similar humanistic views wins recognition; the relations with America come into the established at the time system of contacts and interactions of the Bulgarian culture with the cultures of the world.

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**Илия Конев**

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